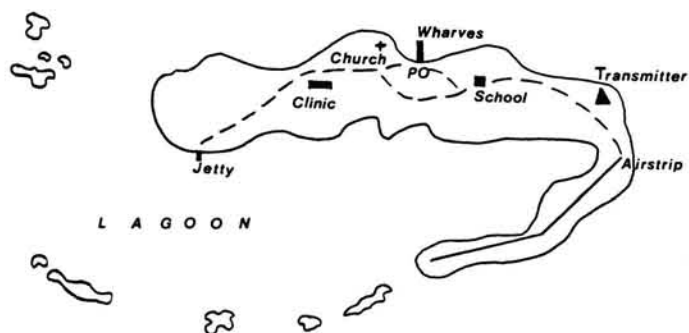


The Challenge of Scale



Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth



Commonwealth Secretariat

The Challenge of Scale

Educational Development in the
Small States of the Commonwealth

Edited by

Kazim Bacchus
University of Alberta, Canada

Colin Brock
University of Hull, Britain



**Education Programme
Commonwealth Secretariat**

First published in 1987 by:

The Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom

Governments of developing Commonwealth countries wishing to reproduce the material in this publication in whole or in part in any language should inform the Commonwealth Secretariat which may be able to offer them some assistance in doing so.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

ISBN 0 85092 318 2

© Copyright Commonwealth Secretariat 1987
New edition 1993

1993 edition reformatted and prepared for publication
by Paren & Stacey Editorial Consultants

May be purchased from:

Commonwealth Secretariat Publications
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom

Contents

Preface to New Edition	ix
Editorial Introduction	1
Rationale and format	1
Socio-economic context	3
Some implications for human resource development	6
Provision of educational services	8
1 The Educational Context	11
<i>Colin Brock</i>	
The question of scale	11
The question of isolation	16
The question of dependency	19
Educational profiles and trends	21
Conclusion	25
2 Problems of Policy and Development	26
<i>John Rodhouse</i>	
Questions of policy	27
Possibilities for development	30
Summary	33
3 The Professional Development of Educational Personnel	35
<i>Charles Farrugia</i>	
The quality of personnel needed	36
The professional development of teachers	39
Training specialised administrative personnel	43
Regional co-operation	48
4 The Development of Curriculum and Materials	50
A Caribbean view	
<i>Howard Fergus</i>	
Sources of curriculum	50

Curriculum content	58
The role of examinations	60
Strategy for change	62
Developing curriculum materials	65
Concluding comment	68
5 Curriculum Development in Pacific Island Countries	70
With specific reference to Tonga <i>Konai Thaman</i>	
Characteristics of curriculum development in the South Pacific	71
Teachers as curriculum developers	72
Implications for the management of curriculum change	77
Conclusions	82
6 The Provision of Post-Secondary Education	85
<i>Kazim Bacchus</i>	
Approaches to post-secondary education	86
Challenges of post-secondary provision	90
Summary	92
7 Technical Education Needs	95
<i>Suresh Munbodh</i>	
The wider economic context	95
The national context	97
The administration of technical education	101
Conclusion	110
8 Distance Education	112
<i>Hilary Perraton & Kenneth Tsekoa</i>	
General principles	112
The case of Lesotho	116
Lessons learnt	118

9 Educational Provision and Operation	120
Regional dimensions in the South Pacific	
<i>'Ana Taufe'ulangaki</i>	
The case for regional educational activities	120
Some regional educational activities	125
Effects of regionalism on provision and operation	130
What then of regionalism?	136
10 Regional Co-operation	142
A view from the University of the South Pacific	
<i>Prem Udagama</i>	
Efforts at regional co-operation in the South Pacific	142
Regional educational activities of the	
South Pacific Commission	144
Regional education institutions	146
Other regional co-operative activities in education	152
The prospects for greater regional co-operation	157
11 Education in the Indian Ocean and the Regional Dimension	162
<i>Ranjit Goordyal & Zotique Pragassen</i>	
The small Commonwealth states	
of the Indian Ocean region	162
Education systems	165
Educational issues	169
The regional dimension	171
Prospects for regional co-operation	173
12 Caribbean Regionalism, Education and Marginality	177
<i>Errol Miller</i>	
The context of Caribbean marginality	178
Education and marginality	179
Political changes since 1945	180
Quantitative increases in education	181
Major issues	183

Regional capacity in education	186
The Caribbean at the crossroads	191
13 Multilateral Assistance to Education in the Pacific Island States	196
A view from Unesco/SOPAC	
<i>Peter Higginson</i>	
Preamble	197
Scale	198
Isolation	200
Dependence	201
Mismatched solutions	202
Planning and management of the ambiguous	204
Counterpart contributions, recurrent costs and other myths	206
Promise for the future	208
A parting thought	211
14 Aid for Education	212
<i>Rudolph Goodridge & Bevis Peters</i>	
The context	212
Some positive aspects of educational aid	214
Problems	216
Needs	218
Conclusion	220
Appendices	
A The Small States of the Commonwealth	222
B Select Bibliography on Small States	226
C List of contributors	229

The small states

Of Commonwealth's 50 members, 28 have populations under two million



Caribbean

Under 2m
Trinidad & Tobago

Under 1m
Guyana

Under 300,000
Barbados
Bahamas

Under 200,000
Belize
St Lucia
St Vincent & the Grenadines

Under 100,000
Grenada
Dominica
Antigua & Barbuda
St Kitts-Nevis

Europe

Under 1m.
Cyprus
Malta

Asia

Under 300,000
Brunei Darussalam

Africa

Under 2m
Lesotho
Botswana

Under 1m.
Swaziland
Gambia

Indian Ocean

Under 2 m.
Mauritius

Under 300,000
Maldives

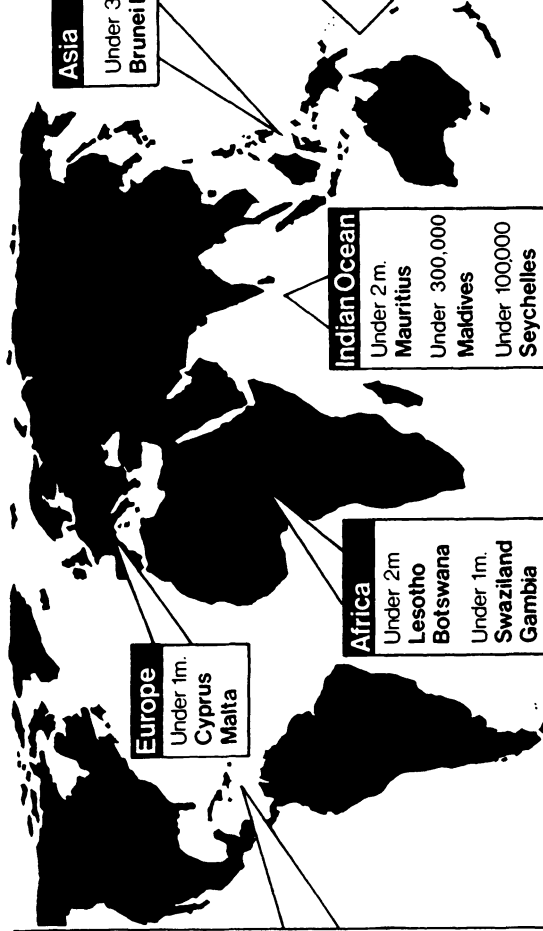
Under 100,000
Seychelles

Pacific

Under 400,000
Solomon Islands

Under 200,000
Western Samoa
Vanuatu

Under 100,000
Tonga
Kiribati
Tuvalu
Nauru



Preface to New Edition

In November 1985 a group of educators, administrators, academics and agency officials from sixteen countries met in Mauritius. They came from a wide scatter of countries: from the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, from West and Southern Africa, from the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific, and from the States of Jersey. They were united in their interest, expertise and commitment to the educational development of the smaller countries of the Commonwealth.

The report of their deliberations, *Educational Development: The Small States of the Commonwealth* (Commonwealth Secretariat 1986) records the main outcomes of the Mauritius meeting; a meeting which recommended a programme of activities for the Secretariat on the challenges which smallness of scale sets national education systems. This programme received endorsement from the Tenth Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Nairobi, Kenya (July 1987).

One early outcome of the programme was this book, edited by Kazim Bacchus and Colin Brock. Based on specially commissioned papers it brings together the knowledge, perceptions and experience of a group of individuals who rarely get the opportunity to meet and learn from one another despite the strong similarities in their countries' educational objectives, systems and challenges. In this sense the book represents a central tenet of the Secretariat's work; the belief that the small states of the Commonwealth have much to gain from one another.

This volume precedes a series of more technical studies on some of the issues which are identified by the book's authors. These include the supply, training and professional support of educational personnel in archipelago countries; training the multipurpose administrator and post-secondary policy options in small states.

The contributions are those of the individuals concerned and do not necessarily represent the views of their governments,

organisations, agencies or the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Since its publication in 1987 *The Challenge of Scale* has been in steady demand throughout the Commonwealth. It is quoted as a standard work in the growing volume of work which has education in small states as its focus. In institutions such as the University of the South Pacific it is being used as a reader for education students. Whilst the material here was written in 1987/88 the central theme of the book remains unaffected: national smallness of scale sets distinctive challenges for educational development. The text therefore remains the same, except for minor editorial changes. The map and the statistical data in Appendix A have been updated.

Education Programme
Human Resource Development Group
Commonwealth Secretariat

1993

Editorial Introduction

Rationale and format

This volume is one of the bi-products of the Pan-Commonwealth Experts Meeting on Educational Development: the Small States of the Commonwealth, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat and held in Mauritius from 19-27 November 1985. The official report of that meeting was published in November 1986 and is listed in the select bibliography (Appendix B), but the many individual papers and seminar contributions that helped to make that meeting so productive could obviously not be included in a summary report designed to synthesise the main outcomes of the discussion. It has been our pleasure and privilege to respond to the invitation of the Commonwealth Secretariat to compile a collection of essays on a selection of the themes arising from that formative conference.

The *modus operandi* has been to invite potential contributors, mostly from among the participants of the Mauritius meeting but sometimes from colleagues who were unable to attend, to give their individual views on specified topics thus enabling them to include information or ideas not present in their contribution in Mauritius or arising from the discussion there. These contributions have been edited and in some cases combined to give a structure that gives the volume a meaningful sequence and format. In some cases considerable modification has taken place, in others less so, but in any case the identity of the original contributor is given in the introduction to each chapter. We are sorry that in the event it has not been possible

to include all invited contributions as constraints on the scale and balance of the volume have had to be observed: we are most grateful to all those who responded to our call.

Two main objectives have informed this exercise: firstly, to provide an opportunity for professional educators in or from small member states of the Commonwealth to contribute to the literature that is developing on education in small countries; secondly, by operating in this way to produce a volume that is both informative and readable for those at work where collections of work on small states may not be readily available. We hope that we have struck a reasonable balance in trying to meet our two objectives. A brief bibliography is included as Appendix B in the hope that at least some of the titles may be accessible or attainable by readers in small countries. This is not a volume which gives chapter and verse in the form of footnotes and references. Nonetheless, the majority of contributions are based upon documentary research as well as personal experience and we are most grateful for that. For obvious reasons then, we have not included any discussion on the definition of 'smallness'. We therefore suffice with the provision of Appendix A which simply comprises a list of member states and territories within the Commonwealth with individual populations of less than two million; an arbitrary figure but one which is often used as a bench mark for small country work.

This volume does not enter the academic debate on smallness. Nevertheless it is necessary to include in this introduction some broad comments on the variable context of small states so as to provide a degree of geographical and socio-economic perspective for the educational essays that follow.

Whatever the threshold of scale used in a definition of smallness, be it spatial, demographic or economic, the most obvious characteristic of the small states of the Commonwealth is that of variety. This must be taken into account when generalising about the characteristics of education, and the problems and challenges which it faces. Appendix A not only illustrates the vast range in territorial, demographic and economic scale that exists within small states but also the

geographical variety as between island, archipelago, littoral and landlocked countries. There are too, many cultural differences. It is appropriate then to preface a volume on education in small states with brief consideration of socio-economic contexts.

Socio-economic context

Problems of development and overconcentration

While there is no necessary association between size, however it is defined, and income per head or rate of growth of an economy, very few small states have achieved high levels of industrialisation. Further, out of the countries which have been classified by the United Nations as 'hard core', least-developed countries, nearly all of them are small. This suggests the propensity of small states to be poor, or at least to be faced with major economic difficulties in efforts to achieve development, because of factors which are usually related to their size. Their limited population base usually means that they have a very restricted internal market for products and as a result they do not enjoy the advantages of economies of scale which are important for successful industrialisation and economic diversification. In short, the economies of most small countries are overconcentrated.

Open economies and overdependence

Another feature of small nation states is the high degree of 'openness' of their economies, a factor which has encouraged outward economic integration, often at the expense of efforts to grapple with internal economic problems. This fact is partly revealed by the high ratio of imports to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which is about five times higher than the average for all exporting countries. This is directly related to the heavy concentration on a limited range of products and markets, which in turn contributes to economic, political and cultural vulnerability.

Some small countries have sought to overcome this constraint by the establishment of economic free-trade zones which allow

foreign firms to capitalise on relatively cheap labour in assembling or finishing products locally for specific markets abroad. For example, companies manufacturing television sets in the USA have been assembling these in smaller islands like St Kitts and Nevis and then shipping the assembled sets back to mainland USA without having to pay import duties for bringing in the parts to be assembled. However, this development strategy has so far not proved very successful, often benefiting only a very small section of the population. This is partly due to the relatively high cost of developing the necessary local infrastructure, such as roads, and extending their highly subsidised transportation services to these free zone areas.

High public expenditure

Basic services such as education, police and health have to be provided for the entire population. In small states the size of the public service expressed as a percentage of the total population tends to be disproportionately large. Further, the small number of clients for whom such services have to be provided makes it difficult for the administration of small states to enjoy economies of scale. Both the provision and the administration of public services tend to be more costly proportionately than in larger nation states.

Distance costs

The remoteness of areas with small clusters of population from the capital city can also add considerably to the difficulties of developing all areas of a country. The costs of transportation especially in archipelagic nations can be extremely high in meeting the needs of communities scattered across many islands. The per capita costs of providing services such as education tend to be higher than in larger and more densely populated countries. In addition, because of the economic, cultural and sometimes environmental differences that exist in some small nation states with widely scattered populations, the relevance of a centrally planned educational programme, and particularly a national curriculum, may be reduced and the problem

and cost of administration and supervision of educational services increased.

The dominance of public employment

Another feature of some small scale economies is the fact that the main generator of wage earning jobs tends to be the government. Public sector activities in general are usually large in comparison with those carried out by the private sector with all the inflexibility which this can bring about. This can affect adversely the pace with which new projects are developed and implemented. Further, much of the public sector spending tends to benefit the capital cities at the expense of the rural areas. Salaried and wage earning employees are concentrated in the capital with government workers predominant. Thus the multiplier effect of much government expenditure tends to be concentrated around the urban centres, widening the gap between the urban and rural areas. This can leave the rural economy in a further state of decay by contributing to the 'brain drain' from the rural to the urban areas; a phenomenon not peculiar to small countries.

Problems of finance

Small nation states tend to experience major difficulties in raising commercial loans. Even multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank do not readily respond to their need for capital, partly due to the cost of vetting and approving small loans applications and then servicing them. In addition, these states tend to have difficulties in attracting foreign investors, usually because of the limited size of the home market. Therefore the major role in economic development is played by domestic entrepreneurs and by government.

Aid dependency

Because of the difficulty of securing access to international capital markets, small nation states have to depend heavily on aid, and on a per capita basis tend to receive more of it than do countries with a larger population. But while this has its advantages there are certain

potential disadvantages in such a situation. For example, donors might, and often do, impose their own criteria for granting aid. This process can determine the development priorities of small nation states irrespective of local priorities. In the field of education, lending agencies tend to dispense aid according to their perceptions of how education can help in the development process and not necessarily on the views of the countries requesting the aid. This in turn helps to increase their vulnerability to the open and hidden agendas of metropolitan countries.

Patronage and nepotism

Finally because of size, isolation and other factors the relationships among various sub-groups in the population of a small nation state tend to be characterised by strong personal ties and this can prove a challenging problem to educational administrators, especially when there are also racial or ethnic differences in the population. The high level of public visibility engendered by smallness brings instances of maladministration and partiality very much to the fore.

Some implications for human resource development

Disparities in the distribution of benefits as between capitals and free trade zones and the other areas of small countries have tended to increase. The flow of 'educated' manpower from the peripheral areas to the core around the primate city or town has grown. Furthermore, the kind of 'screwdriver' industries which outside entrepreneurs have spawned do not usually demand individuals with much technical skill, certainly not with higher levels of education. This disparity has another dimension regionally. Attempts to establish regional trading blocks have often tended to favour the larger, often at the expense of the smaller members states; the core/periphery problem appearing at the regional level.

Additional or alternative attempts to diversify small state economies have also occurred through the production of a wider range of agricultural commodities and the encouragement of tourism, but

despite such efforts the economies of the small states remain fragile. Further, because of the limited size of the economy, one or two transnational corporations operating in a small country can almost entirely dominate domestic production for export thereby increasing economic, political and cultural vulnerability through increased dependence. So increased integration into a world market from a position of profound weakness, and further dependence on world trade, plus their lack of influence over the markets in which their products are sold, tends to reinforce the dominance/dependency relationship between small nation states and metropolitan centres, whether through neo-colonial ties or the emergence of new industrial powers such as Japan.

The limited size of both population and economy are likely to have effects on the demand for education. Because of the tendency towards product specialisation, the range and level of skills required by local industries is often very restricted. Therefore any major attempt to diversify the educational services by increasing the range of skills offered can only effectively take place if there is an increased demand for trained manpower, which is often dependent on further economic diversification. However, as already noted, a limited population base imposes serious constraints on diversification.

Because of the limited labour market in small states for highly educated and trained manpower, there is often a lack of clear career opportunities, especially for individuals who are well qualified and competent. Therefore an individual's chances of moving up the occupational ladder in such circumstances can often prove frustrating, especially when a few, relatively young people fill the only jobs to which he/she could aspire. Partly for these reasons, when students from small nation states go abroad for further education they are often disinclined to return home, especially if they have pursued specialist studies in areas for which the local demand for their skills is limited. Even so, because of the small manpower resource base of microstates there is often a lack of spare capacity, in terms of qualified personnel available locally, which would allow these countries to send staff abroad for further training without adversely affecting the operation

of their existing organisations. So when new projects are initiated there is often a shortage of persons with the required skills to carry them out, especially in areas in which persons with specialist training are required. And if there is not likely to be any further demand for these specialised skills after a project is completed, then there is little sense in training local staff for jobs which disappear on completion of a particular project. This can result in a lack of local expertise to work on new development projects which can add substantially to their cost, through the employment of expatriates.

Provision of educational services

Given the broadly similar constraints facing small Commonwealth states in economic terms, those providing services - including educators - need to recognise the following points:

- 1 Certain non-manipulable variables are part of the very nature of small states and while they impose constraints in terms of the way in which educational services are provided they should be looked at more as challenges, with educational planners and administrators trying to come up with more non-traditional and innovative approaches.
- 2 Certain manipulable variables, though they would affect the nature and quality of the educational services needed, can only be 'manipulated' through adequate and appropriate economic and political strategies. Such responsibilities do not usually fall on the educators, who can often only work on their outcomes since the way these variables are dealt with would affect the nature of the educational programmes which they would have to provide.
- 3 Certain manipulable variables in education might help to reduce the constraints which size often imposes on the provision of educational services by traditional methods. It is to this which the

attention of the educators has to be directed in their efforts to produce appropriate educational policies and programmes.

Different degrees of educational provision

In trying to identify the manipulable variables there is a need to distinguish between those small nation states in which

- the provision of universal primary education is still not a reality
- primary education is universally provided, albeit in need of qualitative improvement; secondary education facilities are limited and no tertiary education is available locally
- both primary and secondary education are well provided and some tertiary education facilities are available locally, possibly even at university level.

Staff development and policy-making

The educational problems, needs and priorities in each of the above situations for small states must be different. That is why policy development must be locally generated, and the temptation to replicate educational models from larger developed countries should be resisted. A danger into which it is comparatively easy for a small country to be drawn is that of embarking upon overambitious programmes of educational development, especially in view of implications for recurrent expenditure. The greater the involvement of local expertise at an early stage in the development of policy the more likely that realistic routes of educational reform are followed. However, this does depend upon a cadre of skilled and experienced professionals being available locally. Due to the long standing tradition of 'education for migration' in many small states, it is the absence of such a cadre that tends to overburden local officials and limit the separation between policy development and policy implementation.

It is our conviction, therefore, that there is a need for the infusion of flexibility into the strategies identified and developed by education officials in small Commonwealth states. One way to lay the foundations

for the staff development inherent in this objective would be to ensure equality of treatment for all public officials. It would seem that lack of comparability in this respect normally works to the disadvantage of those in the education service. A greater proportion of an inevitably small pool of talent needs to be gathered into this area.

We see this volume as a small contribution to the process of staff development in the education services of small Commonwealth states in that it provides an opportunity for those confronting educational problems in similar contexts to make connections through authorship and readership. We hope it will foster discussion and highlight the need for continued sharing of knowledge and ideas as between those concerned locally, regionally or internationally with educational development in the small states of the Commonwealth. For while appropriate policy in such states will almost certainly be locally generated, that policy will be all the more appropriate for being informed by the experiences and ideas of others charged with making policy in similar circumstances of constraints of scale.

Kazim Bacchus

Professor, Department of Educational Foundations,
University of Alberta, Canada

Colin Brock,

Chairman of the International Educational Unit,
University of Hull, Britain

1 The Educational Context

Colin Brock

A Commonwealth Secretariat survey of education in a sample of small states, conducted in preparation for the Eighth Commonwealth Education Conference (Sri Lanka 1980), and the monograph *Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Education in the Small States of the Commonwealth* (Commonwealth Secretariat 1984) both identified the factors of scale, isolation and dependence as being of critical significance to educational development and prospects in small countries. In this chapter, Colin Brock, the author of the monograph, considers the same three concepts in order to provide the educational context for the studies which follow.

The question of scale

Of the three main characteristics under discussion here, scale is most directly tied to the notion of smallness. Smallness of national scale is clearly a relative concept, and may be measured in terms of land area, population or gross national product. The relationship between each of the three indices, in respect of any one small country, provides the context of scale for that state. In any particular case, one or two of the indices may not be considered to be small. For example, there are small wealthy countries, or countries with large land areas but small populations. So, while scale is certainly a significant factor in the context of educational provision, it is difficult to generalise since the

12 The Challenge of Scale

relationship between geographic, demographic and economic dimensions will be peculiar to each state, providing a unique context for its educational provision. Of course, all states are unique, but one of the outcomes of smallness seems to be to place the idiosyncrasy of the state at the centre of the stage. There may be fewer policy options and the margin for error is less generous than for larger states.

Extent of educational provision

There is no reason why the extent of educational provision itself should not be one of the indices of scale. Whereas the three indices already mentioned operate on a continuous gradient - that is to say there is always some land, some people and some money involved - formal education provision may be completely lacking at certain levels as the overall scale of a country diminishes. For example, there comes a point at which the provision of a higher education sector becomes problematic, then a further education sector, and even a secondary sector in some cases. This perception of smallness is already well developed within multi-island states in respect of the ceiling of educational provision in different island communities and consequent related problems of migration.

Educational problems

Some of the educational problems experienced by small states are similar to those of larger nations but 'writ large'. This is to say, they are more extreme versions of the same problems. For example, in all countries there is a problem of matching the output of the education system with the manpower needs of the economy. In large, diversified national economies with substantial and ongoing structural change, selecting and targeting a particular occupation is becoming increasingly difficult. A curriculum broadly based in knowledge and skills is desirable. In a small concentrated economy it is obviously not suitable to focus the school curriculum towards just one or two areas of occupation. Small concentrated economies are also 'open' and at the mercy of major trading power structures. For both reasons a broadly based curriculum is desirable. However, unless migration to

other work opportunities is available, the direct application of diffuse skills is problematic in the small national context.

Another problem shared by both small and large states, but more acutely felt in the former is that of professional promotion, especially within the teaching service. The functionally more specific training operating in large states may be limiting. In a large economy that is in recession, or at best stagnant, whole generations of teachers may find promotion denied to them. In a small economy, however buoyant at any given time, the question of promotion is always a problem because of the very few senior posts there are in the system anyway. This is one of the factors leading to a 'brain drain' from smaller states to larger ones.

The problem of selection is universal. At some stage there has to be selection, but the larger and more affluent the system, the longer it can be delayed, with obvious benefit to the adjustment of educational output to meet demand as well as to the personal development of the individual.

Small nation states have the problem of servicing a dual economy comprising a highly localised and concentrated sector and an international sector requiring diffuse skills as well as those of advanced information technology. Smallness of scale acts against the provision of such skills for all, especially in developing countries, and for the maintenance of selection. With selection comes the influence of personalised politics and patronage, with the elite of a small country often utilising external private schooling which may lead to a weakening, even neglect, of the state system of schools.

One very difficult problem for small states to overcome is the higher unit costs they incur in providing most forms of education. If curricula comparable to those of larger states are to be resourced and staffed then this is bound to be proportionately more expensive. The alternative is to provide a less specialist teaching force and a more integrated curriculum, which implies a more generalist training. While this may be desirable in respect of increased localisation, it may be damaging to the international dimension that has to be addressed in a nation state, whereas a small or peripheral component of a large

state does not have to cope with this dimension.

In addition to problems that are more acute versions of those of larger states, there are also those that are more specific to small states. Firstly, smallness of national population beyond a certain point - and depending on the affluence of any particular case - will prevent the provision and operation of a complete education system. That is to say certain specialisms or even entire sectors may be ruled out. In general, the smaller the state the greater the problem in this respect, leading to various forms of dependency.

Secondly, the small scale of a system will require multiple roles and duties on the part of its administrators. For example, a permanent secretary in a small state may have responsibility for health, welfare and wider aspects of culture, as well as for the day-to-day administration of formal schooling. The educational and training model experienced by such administrators in their own development is often too specialised and bureaucratic, having been derived from larger systems.

Similarly teachers in small country systems, like their administrators, often have to cope with multigrade and multidisciplinary duties. The training they have had, often outside of their own national context, has often been too specialised and based on resources that are either lacking or inappropriate in the small country context.

For both administrators and teachers in all countries, opportunities for release from routine duties in order to reflect on their work and acquire new skills are vital, not only for personal development but also for staff development in general. The smaller the country, in terms both of economy and demography, the more difficult it is for staff to be released. In many cases there may be only one person looking after a key specialism, in which case release may require buying in a replacement. This not only doubles the cost but runs the risk of further external influence that may be inappropriate.

In the same way that individuals in small states need to be flexible and polyvalent, so too do the institutions, but they have not normally been established in any radical or diversified form. The task

of reforming and perhaps combining previously independent units of the system may not only be disproportionately costly to achieve (though not necessarily to operate), but also may incur professional disfavour in that fewer senior positions may result from such rationalisation.

The smaller the state, the less likelihood of the economic and technical capacity for producing new, more locally relevant, curriculum materials at any level. Yet any curricular reform aimed at greater localisation of the curriculum - generally regarded as desirable - will not be sustained without such support in the way of new materials. It is, of course, possible to produce teaching materials with very simple technology, but in order for them to be acceptable and therefore effective, it is often necessary to overcome the tendency to reject materials that are not up to commercially published standards in terms of paper quality and multicoloured illustrations. It is difficult to interest commercial publishing houses in the very small print runs that are involved in the servicing of such systems.

Some educational advantages

Smallness of national scale, especially if combined with territorial compactness and some degree of economic diversification, can confer distinct advantages over larger states, and especially over small or peripheral components of such states.

Firstly, the political status of national independence - at any rate in respect of controlling and operating the education system - produces a situation of close proximity as between those administering the system, those teaching in it, and those who are clients of it. Accessibility of all parties to each other makes for a recognition of various needs and points of view even if these are not necessarily acted upon. The dead hand of a large bureaucracy is less heavily imposed in a situation where a class teacher may well meet the minister of education through casual contact in the community.

Secondly, once a decision has been made, for example in respect of a curriculum reform with associated in-service training for teachers, the speed with which it can be implemented across the

whole system is potentially much greater than in a large state. Such a situation should engender an ambience of popular participation by teachers and clients alike in the development of education.

Given the need for a greater localisation of curriculum in small states, that is to say a closer correspondence between the content of courses and texts and the realities of the physical, social, cultural and economic context of any particular country, it should be possible for teachers and students to operate as the research base for accumulating local information and formulating materials for teaching about it.

It must, of course, be recognised that not all small states are sufficiently compact to enjoy advantages such as are described above, and this problem leads directly to the next issue.

The question of isolation

Like scale, isolation is not only a relative concept, but also applies itself in a number of different forms.

Spatial isolation and educational provision

Sheer distance and genuine remoteness come first to mind with respect to isolation. This form of isolation may operate in terms of distance from other countries or even distance between components of one country. The latter would normally be perceived as referring to islands, but could equally well apply to isolated communities within a continental territory such as Botswana, where the combination of smallness of population and vastness of land area occurs. The implications of logistics and costs for educational provision are obvious, to say nothing of cultural isolation and the effects of migration from periphery to core. This type of isolation, combined with smallness of scale, has engendered co-operation between clusters of small states in the field of education, including the establishment of shared universities - the University of the West Indies and the University of the South Pacific.

Remoteness does not necessarily involve vast distances. Internal difficulties of communication, even within small compact states,

can render some communities relatively isolated and when compounded with the isolation of the nation in a wider sphere can be doubly disadvantageous. Indeed the initial remoteness may render internal isolation more difficult to overcome. In consequence, progress through the sectors of education may be severely inhibited.

Another form of spatial isolation is that of aerial constraint or insularity, most obviously affecting geographic islands, but also small states that are political enclaves. In both cases possibilities for cross-border interaction are constrained and probably more costly in comparison with normal land boundaries between larger states.

Given the relative nature of isolation, small states are obviously affected differentially. For example, whereas the small island archipelago state may normally be expected to be in a difficult position, proximity to a larger neighbour may overcome the problem, if relations between the two are suitably co-operative. For example, the symbiotic relationship between the British and American Virgin Islands and the relative proximity of both to the mainland USA largely overcomes the isolation of insularity in respect of education. By contrast the relative isolation of Seychelles or the Maldives in the Indian Ocean confers no such benefits.

The location of a small state in relation to networks of transport and communication may well offset apparent physical remoteness. If a small state happens to be included in such a network, or better still is a nodal point, such as Barbados, Cyprus or Fiji, this can have considerable benefits for education. Not only will such a focus be in regular touch with larger nations and their educational developments, it will also be more likely to become the centre for private or post-compulsory provision within a group of small states. Modernisation of transport, and especially the development of air travel has, paradoxically, worked towards a greater degree of insularity in some small island regions.

Implications of political isolation

This is not only a question of political geography, but also of political status. The strong association throughout the world between formal

education systems and the national spatial parameter is particularly inappropriate for small states whose concerns have increasingly to be with very local and global contexts at the same time. Educational provision is a political tool in all countries, and the obverse of public accessibility mentioned above is that of a tendency towards personalised and individualised politics. This may have implications for the patronage of the very few opportunities that may exist for the professional development of teachers. The intensity of political rivalry that may exist within small political units can severely constrain the steady development of educational provision.

Some small states find themselves in the position of being political enclaves, for example Lesotho, Belize, The Gambia, Malta and Gibraltar, relatively isolated from other Commonwealth states and having to deal with larger surrounding or adjoining neighbours. This can have implications for education, especially in the field of languages, given that relations with neighbouring states are inevitable. Hence the significance of Spanish in Gibraltar and Belize, of Arabic and Italian in Malta, and French in The Gambia.

Effects of social and cultural isolation

Small, relatively isolated states, and especially islands, tend to be particularly idiosyncratic socially and culturally as has already been noted. Here again language is an indicator, with obvious implications for formal education. As an extreme case, Vanuatu is thought to have scores of linguistic systems within a population of about 120,000. The language of Malta is unique and therefore, although central to the culture, requires the acquisition of other languages for commercial and political intercourse.

The particularity of the economic, political and social history of each and every small Commonwealth state, and especially those that are islands, has in each case engendered a unique 'island culture' within which formal education operates and by which it is moulded. At one and the same time, this is the strength of local culture and identity, but also potentially problematic in terms of educational co-operation with other small states within a small country cluster.

Tensions between local needs and regional facilities are often exhibited, though they may be overcome in respect of regional co-operation in curriculum development.

One cultural feature found in many small states of the Commonwealth, and with which education has much to do, is that of a migration mentality. Given the limited local opportunities and the wider opportunities for migration that existed during the formative period of educational provision in such states, it was an inevitable consequence that schooling was seen and operated as a vehicle for emigration to professional occupations in the metropolises or regional centres. This fitted well the highly selective and academic model of schooling bequeathed to small states as part of the colonial legacy. Although opportunities for migration still exist in some places, the dominant role of schooling as a vehicle for emigration is no longer appropriate in a situation where, as has already been noted, local imperatives are not to the fore. The adjustment of this received model of schooling to a different cultural context is one of the major challenges facing small states.

The question of dependency

Here again, like scale and isolation, the concept of dependence is a relative one, and must embrace that of interdependence in respect both of metropolitan and regional forces.

Economic dependence

This has been noted in the Editorial Introduction, but must at least be listed here as the dominant form of dependence to which other forms, such as those discussed below, are subordinate.

Cultural dependence

Formal educational systems, their values, assumptions and operations, are together with institutionalised religions of various types, the foremost vehicles for the maintenance of cultural dependency. Indeed their influence is so ingrained that, as Howard Fergus puts it, the cultures of most small states of the Commonwealth are 'hybrid'.

There is no way, given the international implications of political independence and the world status of the English language, that the situation will be reversed. Nonetheless, there is an urgent need to redress the balance between the international and the local components of the culture of most small states in favour of the latter, and this means fundamental curriculum reform.

Dimensions of educational dependency

Clearly the old metropolitan dimension of educational dependency remains very strong in many small nation states. The systems of educational administration and institutionalised learning are powerful agents of inertia that continue to constrain reforms. Likewise the nature and content of the curriculum in broad terms reflects a certain epistemological view that needs to be challenged beyond the stage of localisation of content within a received structure of knowledge.

The maintenance of metropolitan links through scholarships and other support to educators from small Commonwealth states, may assist the acquisition and enhancement of various skills but it is also a feature of continued dependency, as is the sustained hold over most educational publishing by companies based in the older developed nations.

Yet one of the implications of smallness of national scale is a greater degree of dependency than that experienced by larger states. Dependency is a fact of life, and in the post-independence experience of many small states, old metropolitan dependency has been joined, or in some cases supplanted, by new metropolitan dependency. By this is meant the development of links with, or receipt of support from other powerful states, for example the influence of the USA in educational development in the Commonwealth Caribbean, or the revival of the French connection in Mauritius and Seychelles, the interest of Australia in the Indian Ocean Islands and of Japan in the South Pacific. There is value for small states in many of these new links but there are added complications for the redirection of education towards internal local cultural imperatives.

Regional co-operation and interdependency

Some small states of the Commonwealth are isolated to an extent that co-operation in education with other small states is not logistically feasible at the present time. However, others exist in clusters where co-operation has been developed over several decades, notably in the Caribbean and South Pacific regions.

There is no doubt that regional co-operation, especially in respect of a shared university and systems of external examinations at secondary level has been strongly beneficial to all small states involved in each consortium, but the varying degrees of smallness of national scale have rendered these benefits differential. In other words, some states benefit more than others. To the extent that those states hosting a campus of the regional university benefit considerably, one may identify a new regional dependency experienced by the majority of smaller states in each region. This comes about through the tendency for students migrating to the university to remain in the campus states, in other words a 'brain drain'. In general, the smaller and more peripheral the state, the less the benefit from regional co-operation in respect of the shared university. In the area of shared external examinations, however, and especially in respect of the Caribbean Examinations Council, small members of the group have probably benefited as much as the others. Regional co-operation in education for small states is undoubtedly necessary and beneficial. It is just that there is a greater price to pay in terms of coping with local curriculum imperatives by the smaller, less influential members.

Educational profiles and trends

It is not for this chapter to comment in detail on the sectors and issues discussed in the specialist contributions which comprise this volume. However a brief overview can provide a backdrop for the national and regional observations which follow.

The primary sector

As in large states, this is a crucial formative stage, the success or failure of which will largely determine whether or not subsequent developments are successful. One of the advantages of national smallness has been the early establishment of universal primary education, at least in terms of basic provision, in most of the small Commonwealth states. Large developing countries with continued demographic increase are finding this goal much more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, the relatively early establishment of primary schooling in the small states had led to a longer tradition of received curriculum, and the development of conservative attitudes to education whereby the formal academic mode is perceived as most desirable. So for the aforementioned localisation of curriculum to be achieved, leading to a greater relevance in the contemporary context, the changes must begin in the primary sector. Attempts at fundamental reform in subsequent sectors are unlikely to take root otherwise. This is precisely what the 1979-83 reforms in Grenadian primary education were attempting to do, including the development of the new primary readers. It is unfortunate, not only for Grenada but for other small island states, that this attempt at localisation of primary curricula was terminated. This is not a response in respect of politics and ideology but rather in terms of the need for schooling in a small island state to correspond more closely with the realities of human ecology and local culture. There is no reason at all why reforms aimed at localisation should be detrimental to achieving high levels of literacy and numeracy during the primary stage.

The secondary sector

Patterns of secondary education are more variable than those of the primary sector as between the small states of the Commonwealth, but most involve selection at some stage. The question of selection is one of the most problematical in national education systems. Large, powerful and developed nations have tended to delay selection as long as possible so as to provide a broad general education for the majority of students. Small states have neither the capacity in terms

of the range of teacher expertise nor the economic scale to support such provision. Yet, as has already been mentioned, small independent states have at one and the same time, to provide for a greater localisation of curriculum and also for the servicing of sophisticated international links and duties. There has to be selection at some point, but it is important for those selected to proceed further in formal education and training to have continued regard to the local dimension. One aspect of secondary schooling that is not conducive to a productive partnership of local and international dimensions is for an influential minority to be schooled off-island in the private sector which normally adopts the traditional received curriculum style. In free societies, which these are, it is difficult to see how this will not continue, but if it does then localisation will remain at best a partial achievement.

At the upper secondary level much can be done to resolve the problem of high unit costs in small states by rationalising this stage with other forms of post-compulsory provision into some sort of tertiary college. This has been developed, or is in process of coming about, in some small states, for example, The Bahamas, Tonga and St Lucia. This is particularly attractive for the middle-range of small Commonwealth states where one such institution is sufficient to the task.

The tertiary sector

The type of development discussed in the previous paragraph can also be used to counter one of the problems experienced by small states, namely the early out-migration of talented young people seeking further and higher education. A tertiary college can provide, at least in a certain range of subjects, the level of tuition and materials support necessary to cover the first year, or perhaps two, of an undergraduate programme. Not only would this mean a shorter absence for those who proceed to campus states, or elsewhere, to complete their first degrees or technical qualifications, but it would also provide a valuable national facility. Even very small states could develop such a college, based on the upper secondary stage and a number of

vocational training areas, and this is being done in some places.

The question of teacher education and training, both initial and in-service, is central to any attempt to realise reform in the schooling system. Given the necessity to generate local research in order to service a more localised curriculum, and then to compile school materials from this information, the teaching force in a small nation state forms the only credible agency for such an activity. In the middle and larger range of small Commonwealth states where teachers' colleges are viable, these can also be the repositories of the necessary skills and resources for local research, which might in any case be supported by other faculties in the type of tertiary college mentioned above. In the smallest of the small, however, that is to say microstates with less than 30,000 people, it is not possible to provide a teachers' college. In such cases, teacher training has had to be off-island and therefore expensive to support. For this reason only a small number can be released and the target of a fully trained profession takes a very long time to achieve. In some such cases programmes of teacher education may be provided by external agencies but located in the small country itself. The expertise thus brought in can be directly related to the local context and assist in the generation of indigenous courses and materials.

The tertiary sector, including teacher education, is one in which regional co-operation is possible for those small countries that are suitably clustered. The advantages and disadvantages of a shared university for different categories of small state within a regional group have been noted above. Regional universities, and other regional organisations, may be able to combine in overcoming distance problems by way of using satellite systems. While the technology for this certainly exists, as do the systems, in both the Caribbean and the Pacific, there are problems of political control and local acceptability of curriculum content, which are of course related. It must be remembered that within each of these regions there exists a wide variety of cultures both between and within individual small states, and regional operations have to be just as sensitive to this as do any other agencies that are external to the region.

Regional universities differ in their structures. Whereas the University of the West Indies was formulated along traditional British lines as, initially, a college affiliated to the University of London, the University of the South Pacific adopted a more radical faculty design directed towards the perceived needs of the region. In practice, however, everything depends on the will of the faculty in both institutions, as to whether local needs are sufficiently addressed and catered for. There is a tendency for the smallest, and for the most remote states to claim, with some justification, that they benefit less than their larger colleagues from the shared university.

Conclusion

It is clear that considerable problems face those responsible for policies and provision in respect of education in the small nation states of the Commonwealth. It is also very difficult to generalise about the educational issues in a group of countries, which, although all small by world standards, range from about two million to just a few thousand in national population.

What is clear, however, is that many of the problems they face are due to smallness of scale, a relatively pronounced isolation, and a high degree of dependency of various kinds. As independent national units, and with diminishing opportunities for migration, there is a need for a greater localisation of curriculum at all levels and flexibility in reforming and managing their education systems. While, for cultural and practical reasons, localisation is desirable, indigenous material has to be researched and developed and international links serviced and maintained. There are fewer people available than in larger countries to do a wider variety of educational work.

So, if there is one goal that is common to all these nations, it is to develop a system that will produce a polyvalent output; generalists not only in academic but also in technical skills. Much value could be had from comparative and co-operative work between small Commonwealth states of a similar scale. Membership of the Commonwealth should be able to facilitate this.

2 Problems of Policy and Development

John Rodhouse

John Rodhouse draws attention to the fact that identifying educational problems in small or large states often implies an obligation to provide a solution. Experience suggests that while the circumstances described as 'problems' in widely different contexts may be very similar, the 'solutions' tend to be more idiosyncratic. The value to small states of sharing their understanding of 'problems' is more likely to lead to a deeper perception of the nature of the 'problems' than to the identification of commonly acceptable 'solutions'. This is not to say that the solution adopted by one country will not be of interest and value to another; indeed, it should stimulate ideas and reactions which may lead to a solution. If geography and other circumstances so indicate, two or more small states may formulate a shared solution; but it is most unlikely that the solution which works in one country will be immediately applicable in another.

He notes a further difficulty. It is a feature of small educational systems that those actively engaged in the formulation and development of policy are also frequently involved in the practical day-to-day operation of the system. Consequently, because of this duality of roles, it is not always easy for the individual, or others, to see clearly where policy-making ends and practical application begins. In such circumstances policy tends to emerge from practice in a somewhat

pragmatic fashion. The leaders in small systems are obliged to recognise this as a fact of small system life. In referring to policy and development programmes and their formulation, no clear distinction can be drawn between policy makers and practitioners. All those who work within a small educational system are in a position to exert a direct influence upon it. People in small systems are so closely bound together that they cannot maintain totally separate and discrete roles.

Questions of policy

It is worth looking to see whether there are any particular conditions which characterise policy-making and policies in small educational systems, and whether those characteristics can be classified as positive or negative in their effects. Some of them may apply more widely in small states and may not be peculiar to educational systems alone.

One obvious characteristic of a small system is that it engages relatively few people in its activity. People produce ideas and if the numbers of teachers and administrators/advisers are limited (and equally the numbers of politicians) then the generation of ideas may also be limited. In such circumstances there is a strong temptation to rely upon borrowing from the thinking current in larger systems, on the assumption that ideas tested in that context will be applicable to conditions in the small system. In other words, education systems in small nation states are seen simply as miniature versions of larger systems, and all that is needed is for modifications to be made to take account of size. While ideas from the large system will certainly contain familiar elements, and clearly some educational policies can have almost universal application, most of the policies adopted in large countries will need considerable adaptation to meet the needs of small systems. Some ideas and policies will be inappropriate and potentially counter-productive.

The relatively small numbers of people involved in formally identifying policies in the system leads to a much closer identification of ideas with particular individuals. As a result policies can become personalised to an extent which is unlikely to apply in a larger system.

This can be a force of enormous benefit if the person to whom the policy is attached has high status and is respected. If the reverse applies then the idea/policy can become tainted by the person perceived as presenting it for acceptance. The obvious danger in this situation is that policies are determined not on the merits of the proposals but on the acceptability of the proposer. One of the ways of avoiding this danger is to take over impersonal ideas from other systems. While the approach appears to be attractive, it carries with it other great dangers, built as it is on systems and social and political contexts which differ from those found in the small state. There is no real escape from the very personal nature of the small system; it is best to accept it and to exploit its strengths, although this should not be at the expense of public participation in policy-making, something which smallness of scale can make a practical proposition.

Good practitioners are the growth points in the small system; identified and given proper encouragement they should be able to contribute as much to the process of policy-making as any of the more orthodox policy-makers of the larger system. Elements of success are often undervalued in small countries, perhaps because of a failure to recognise them. Their exploitation calls for recognition that practice and policy go together. Instead of separating practitioners and policy-makers, the good practitioners should be encouraged to assist in developing policies that will spread the good practices more widely through the system.

However, as Farrugia describes elsewhere in this volume, good practitioners are often poorly equipped to act as policy-makers. Their training and experience do not normally provide them with a range of personal and interpersonal skills, together with the ability to analyse and construct, that will enable them to distil from what they do the components of policy. This can be overcome with the help of short-term periods of secondment. The good practitioner can be taken away from the chalkface for three to six months, with a specific task to identify needs in a given area of the education service and to put forward proposals to meet those needs. The result will not only be a piece of local research directed to national requirements, with

practical proposals for action, but also the first stage in the creation of an effective contributor to policy-making. It is sometimes assumed that it is best to concentrate on one or two good practitioners and to give them a series of secondments. While that may be appropriate for the training of the future leaders of the system, greater benefits will accrue to the system as a whole if over a period of time a larger number of good practitioners have the experience of contributing to policy-making, while maintaining their close contact with the everyday working of the school system. In other words, in-service development of educational practitioners, on a regular basis, is a critical factor for the overall improvement of the system.

A strategy of developing growth points in the system will lead to continuing interaction between those engaged in the delivery of educational services and those responsible for their planning and administration. Not only are the policy outcomes likely to be more readily and swiftly transmitted into practice throughout the system but the very real problems of people and time available to reflect upon long-term needs will be ameliorated.

This lack of time is another inevitable consequence of small scale. Larger organisations can provide some of their members with time, free of day-to-day pressures and demands, to give to the careful analysis and synthesis that policy-making demands. Generally the people in small systems who are expected to project future trends and identify emerging needs are engaged in the daily tasks of coping with current crises and immediate demands. Forward thinking, projection of needs and framing of policy options has to find a place in gaps in daily business or in the margins of professional existence. The harnessing of the talents and the energy that are distributed around the system is vitally necessary if independence is to be maintained.

One further characteristic of policy-making in small educational systems should be recognised. Resources are limited and usually fully utilised. This refers to human resources, finance and materials. Policies are therefore defined firstly in terms of existing resources, and may be constrained by the need to give priority to the continuance of the current service. Policy proposals are not considered

in the abstract but are judged immediately in relation to the resources which are already committed and those that can be seen as likely to be available in the foreseeable future. The small system may find it very difficult to make long-term decisions. As a result there is a strong temptation to adopt as models for future development those presented by the larger, and sometimes more developed, systems. If the temptation can be resisted, and if in-service development of local staff is properly planned, there is the possibility of producing policies more appropriate to indigenous needs and resource capacity.

These characteristics which appear to be particularly relevant in small educational systems are accompanied by other conditions which can act as severe constraints. The ready-made solutions of the large systems are very attractive and may appear to fit the small system's requirements reasonably well. For a variety of reasons such solutions may be adopted and they can then begin to have severely adverse effects. Those effects must then be remedied and that can consume time and energy which would have been much better used in developing a truly local solution. Overcoming such mismatches is often very costly.

The small system is prone to what can only be described as incoherence in policy-making. Whereas the larger system can absorb a measure of mismatch of policies because the lack of matching will occur in particular areas or at particular times, the small system is very exposed. Lack of coherence of policies is readily seen and the results quickly felt; there is no umbrella of broadly defined policy as exists in the large system under which such lack of coherence can be sheltered. Yet the very circumstances that make lack of coherence less acceptable make it more difficult to achieve. A common antidote is to maintain a rigid uniformity of pattern and performance. While this has the advantage of ensuring that policy once made is equally applied, it does little to promote that evolution of good practice into policy described above; an evolution which can lead to successful policy-making in the small system.

Possibilities for development

The distinction between policy and development may not be sharply defined, easily discerned or clearly articulated. Some of the conditions and characteristics of policy-making will be replicated in the overall development of the education system. Development is a process which is dependent upon action and reaction, and it is therefore very closely related to the nature and quality of the human resources of the system and on the strengths of the individuals engaged in its management. There is a sense here in which strength can have a literal meaning. Development requires a sustained and continued effort from those working in the service. While they may be convinced of the rightness of a policy and be committed to the development of the service, the constant pressure of immediate events in the system may absorb all their energies. The managers of a small educational system are rarely able to act as specialists. They are expected to cover a very wide range of activities and sectors. As a result, the development of the education service in a small state must follow the strengths of its leaders. Where they have expertise there will be development; where their skills are lacking and specialist knowledge is limited, there will be a tendency to stagnate. Though this effect can be partially overcome by introducing outside specialist skills for specific purposes and for limited periods, it remains a constraint upon development in small systems.

One means of widening the range over which development can take place is in-service education and training (INSET). Usually INSET is seen as the provision of courses for teachers within the system or the sending of individual teachers outside the system in order to study elsewhere. Two points can usefully be made about INSET in small educational systems. The first is that the cascade model in which teachers from several schools receive training and then impart their newly acquired skills to their colleagues is in reality very imperfect in operation and uncertain in effect. Too much depends upon the status and respect accorded to the individual

teacher in his/her own school. Small systems are very prone to what may be described as 'the prophet without honour syndrome'. More effective INSET can be provided within the school or institution itself; the expert who spends time working with the staff of a school developing their collective as well as their individual skills will have a greater and more lasting effect.

The second point is that INSET takes time and energy from the system and it must be seen to repay more than it consumes. Too often in the small educational system INSET, which should be a means of enriching the whole, becomes an impoverishment. The balance between the aspirations of the individual and the needs of the system is much more critical than in the large system. In large-scale operations the balance is normally weighted in favour of the individual; the advantage of greater motivation more than justifies the 'waste' that results. The small system must weigh the balance in its own favour; the bias must be towards meeting its own needs. In the small system there must be a clearly defined objective for INSET, not only for the participants but also for the system and its institutions. Only in terms of benefit to the system can the cost of INSET be justified. However strong the case for an individual's personal needs, the investment of time, energy and money will not be worthwhile unless the meeting of those needs can be seen as a contribution to meeting the wider needs and development of the system.

That may seem a harsh doctrine when compared with the practice of large educational systems. But the small organisation must husband its resources and energies even more carefully. Large-scale systems can afford an element of waste, of 'casting bread upon the waters'; small systems do not generally have much bread to cast. The individual who takes more than a fair share of INSET resources for personal development may be the only one of very few who can be given such an opportunity. Therefore the system depends very heavily on the successful training of those very few individuals. In the large system there are likely to be many individuals who benefit from training. The chances are greater that there will be some from whom the system will receive substantial benefit.

Experimentation is difficult in the small system; it is likely to be conducted in the public eye and under continuous scrutiny. Failure when it comes, and come it must sometimes, is quickly brought to notice and made the subject of comment. Evidence of wasted effort and initiatives that did not succeed, which elsewhere must assume very large proportions in order to be noticed at all, in small systems is highlighted and condemned. In some ways far too much is expected of the small system and failure to match up to those expectations is not easily forgiven.

This leads to a further constraint upon development. The knowledge that failure will be so public adds to the inertia that is said to pervade all educational systems. Better to do well what is accepted than risk poor performance of new methods, the introduction of yet untried skills, the promotion of changing values and attitudes. The small system calls for professional and political courage which must be sustained through personal contact and confidence. In this the relationship between the political and professional leadership is crucial; there need not be philosophical agreement but there must be mutual respect.

Summary

The policies which will determine the nature of educational provision in small states should:

- relate directly to the identified needs of the community, the educational service and its users
- be readily perceived by all the participants in the process
- be judged on the extent to which the education service meets the community's needs
- draw upon the best practice in the service and encourage and allow good practice to develop and flourish
- be framed within present and foreseeable resources but make due allowance for the introduction of change

The development of educational services in a small state will:

- call for careful use of all resources both human and material
- depend upon the effective use of INSET focused on defined local needs: so far as possible this should be delivered locally
- require mutual respect and confidence between the political and professional leadership of the service and the confidence of the practitioners in that leadership

The saving grace of small educational systems is that because they are small the problems they encounter are small in scale. In consequence they fall within the dimensions which make them manageable. They need never become so large that they overwhelm the system entirely.

3 The Professional Development of Educational Personnel

Charles Farrugia

In writing about the professional development of educational personnel in small developing states, Charles Farrugia draws attention to the complexity of educational processes. He notes that the spatial and demographic scale - together with the relative isolation and dependency experienced by such states are influential variables in respect of the operation of education systems.

He considers the major factors which require the professional development of educational personnel in small states to deserve special attention, highlighting the benefits and limitations of smallness of scale. Professor Farrugia offers suggestions as to how small nations can turn the scale variable to their advantage. In confronting these issues he refers to two central points. First, that the systematic study of small states is at its embryonic stage and therefore at its most hazardous in respect of reaching conclusions and offering prescriptions. Second, small states are similar in many ways, but also very different in others. Therefore, one needs to be extremely circumspect in respect of generalising about this category of country. Between Lesotho and Nauru, for example, there is not only a vast difference in demographic scale, but also in terms of political geography, culture and economy.

The quality of personnel needed

Small states, like their larger counterparts, want schools that have competent and committed teachers and administrators. They want teachers who possess professionally based knowledge in the theory and practice of education, and who find job satisfaction in the belief that they are making an important contribution to the social, cultural and economic development of their country. Such teachers, it is believed, are better able to understand students' abilities to exploit the educational benefits of the social context within which they live and learn, and to assist students to reach their full intellectual and social potential. They need to have mastery over their subject matter and should be competent in marshalling evidence on which reasoned pedagogical judgements can be reached. They should have the communicative competence to share knowledge and skills with students and colleagues, and possess the ability and motivation to further their own professional growth.

In addition, small states, like their larger counterparts, want headteachers and educational administrators who are well acquainted with the requirements and objectives of the national educational system, and who have the competence to actualise them through sound educational and school management techniques. Such personnel are usually able to encourage and enhance the professional competence and commitment of the teaching staff and are more likely to motivate and facilitate the work of those in their charge. The ideal situation is one in which teachers and administrators work harmoniously, experience confidence in their job and in each other and have full occupation satisfaction which is reinforced by adequate salaries and working conditions.

Difficulties in securing high quality personnel

Many small and large developing countries work and aim towards such a model educational service manned by extremely competent specialist staff. In reality, however, they inevitably experience obstacles that limit or thwart their objectives. In this respect the

structures and handicaps faced by small, developing states are often similar to those encountered by large, developing nations. They tend to have an ex-colonial past. Their economic base is volatile and depends on the vagrancies of highly industrialised countries and multinational corporations. Their infrastructures are fragile, with limited financial resources that need to be shared by many more necessary national projects than a developing country can really afford. The majority of their people are at best relatively poor, but regard education as a means of improving their cultural and material well-being, and good schools as ensuring a better future for their children. Despite these constraints, people tend to demand a great deal from their teachers, whom they see as instrumental in aiding the upward social and economic mobility of their children.

Their geographical size and relatively small populations are enduring factors that render small developing states different from their larger counterparts, and which can both enhance or inhibit their educational development. For example, communications in some small states do not necessarily present a problem, except in archipelagos where inter-island contact can be difficult. Because the number of inhabitants is small, a closely integrated society tends to develop a wide network of personal relationships. People are well known to each other so that ministers, high government officials, churchmen, influential businessmen, and their functionaries are easily accessible either formally or unofficially at receptions or family reunions. Thus, ideas, views, requests and complaints are communicated to the appropriate officials quickly and most likely personally. People know the abilities, the needs and the idiosyncrasies of each other (or know someone who knows) and act or react accordingly. Through close personal contacts political and administrative decisions can be taken and implemented rapidly. Equally important, the policy making and implementation process cannot remain anonymous. As a result, many necessary actions are neutralised by gradual modifications due to community pressures. The problem the educational administrator faces is to capitalise on the advantages of these close personal contacts and seek to reduce their disadvantages.

In the somewhat more open societies of small states, minor issues that are easily absorbed in larger countries often assume national dimensions. Minor divisions that are allowed to spread eventually pervade every sector of the population. In communities where practically everyone knows everyone else, where individuals' utterances and actions become public knowledge, it often happens that once a position is taken, one finds it difficult to retract. The close personal interactions within such societies belie the suspicions and antagonism that often exist between different groups, even families. Consequently, once rival positions harden it becomes extremely difficult to avoid the polarisation that ensues. Furthermore, disagreement on one issue may be extended not only to related matters but also totally unrelated issues. When this happens friendships, family loyalty and community pressures can interfere with the decision and implementation process.

The development of a two-party political system has sometimes exacerbated such issues. In a hostile scenario such rivalries can have two major outcomes. It may lead to declared or subtle boycotts of any ideas or projects emanating from the rival group with the result that only a fraction of the available talent is utilised. Furthermore, rivalry leads to duplication of efforts and costs, and a depletion of the limited human and material resources available. The second negative outcome is more pervasive as it undermines local initiatives and perpetuates the already marked, external dependency evident through the inhabitants' greater trust in ideas, programmes and products that originate overseas. In the field of education, this tendency usually results in the neglect of indigenous instructional programmes in preference for the importation of pedagogical content and methods that are alien to local needs.

The challenge which the administrator in a small country faces is to capitalise on the advantages of these close personal contacts and seek to reduce the problems they present. Another positive factor of size is that the educational problems of small nations might not always be as prohibitive as they may appear initially. The number of people, the geographical area and the finances involved are usually too small

to present real difficulties. For example, the size and population of small states are normally equal to those of a small or medium-sized town in larger countries, and their problems have to be seen in that proportion. Nevertheless, there are important exceptions. The first arises when the population, though small in total, is widely scattered such as in archipelagic nations like The Bahamas or Tonga, or those with large areas of land and small populations, like Guyana or Botswana.

Another most important exception arises from the fact that small nation states are also members of the international community and have to look after their international obligations as well as their domestic responsibilities. This dual domestic and international role of officials in small states weighs heavily on their country's limited human and financial resources. Indeed, the shortage of personnel and other resources required to fulfil the many local, national and international tasks is a recurrent theme that must be taken into serious account when considering or planning the development of professional programmes for educational personnel, whether these operate as teachers in schools or in an administrative capacity. Incidentally, such demands for personnel tend to affect the teaching profession more than others, since it is not only the largest source of high level manpower in small states, but the profession has traditionally been seen as the most likely recruiting ground for a range of senior administrative personnel.

The professional development of teachers

The main thrust in the professional development of educational personnel in small states is directed towards initial teacher education programmes on the premise that the more and the better quality of teachers, the better the educational service. As a result one sees in small developing countries (as in larger ones) a gradual lengthening in the duration, and a progressive up-grading of initial teacher education courses, with some states aiming for an all-trained teaching corps. But such a goal is often difficult to achieve, especially by small

nation states, because there are often a range of factors which have to be taken into consideration, including those listed and discussed below.

Stage of educational development

A nation's current state of educational development dictates the level of teacher preparation which it is able to provide. For example, a country that enjoys a long history of universal secondary education and has a high number of qualified young people wanting university education is in a better academic position to aim for a trained teaching corps than the state still struggling with providing universal primary education. The latter might simply not find the qualified candidates to pursue teacher education, even if the actual number of required candidates is relatively small. Furthermore, in states where the number of academically well qualified people is limited, their services will be required to serve other sectors besides education.

Educational priorities

When finances are extremely limited and the national resources are scarce, as in the case of most small states, the benefits derived from extending and up-grading the initial teacher education programme have to be balanced against other educational or other national requirements. One has to consider, for example, whether the extra resources required to lengthen or upgrade the initial teacher programme can be better utilised to train a larger number of teachers and reduce the pupil:teacher ratio, whether to train more specialist subject teachers, or whether to improve the educational provisions for the handicapped. Alternatively, the extra expenses can be diverted to provide better support facilities, extended in-service programmes, more audio-visual material, improved school environments and more attractive salaries for teachers. The need to develop initial teacher education programmes within a framework of national educational priorities is not exclusive to small states. However, because the implementation of policy has more rapid impact, and because the per capita loss of wasted resources is higher in small states

than in larger ones, the need for the setting of priorities and good planning becomes more acute in the former.

Financial implications

From the purely financial aspect there is an addition to the cost of extending and/or upgrading the initial teacher education programme; the need to increase teachers' salaries when they become better educated and trained. Without this there would be no incentive for them to improve their qualifications. Here teachers' trade unions often apply the 'dual role' strategy when in their capacity as professional associations they strive for a better qualified teaching corps, while as bread-and-butter trade unions they demand that teachers' remuneration should reflect their improved qualifications. It is often the case, therefore, that higher qualifications for teachers mean higher emoluments for the largest group of public employees and a higher proportion of the finely balanced national budget going to the salaries of teachers and to education in general.

Socio-economic considerations

The question of salary relativity between the grades of civil service as well as with employees in the private sector is a most pertinent one in the transparent societies of small states. People who have grown and studied together, who are familiar with each others' capabilities and limitations inevitably compare their placing in the salary scale and the social hierarchy, not always without prejudice or envy. It is a common occurrence in closely interrelated societies that a project by one ministry or one private firm is undermined by another because the key officials do not get on well due to personal pique totally unrelated to the project. In such communities it often happens that one official subtly refuses to acknowledge the seniority of a former colleague because he/she regards the latter's promotion as unmerited. Therefore, the upgrading of teachers' qualifications (and their economic and social standing) has to be evaluated carefully for its socio-economic implications in relation to, for example, other less qualified teachers, other members in the civil service, and the white

collar workforce, as part of an overall national income and wages policy.

Again, although these considerations have to be taken into account by all states, the need to keep a harmonious balance within the closely integrated but open societies of small states is crucial. Yet, there is no prescriptive solution, each small nation has to evaluate the needs and objectives according to its own pressing social, political and financial considerations.

Demographic changes

Slight changes in the demography of small states can have immediate and often unpredictable effects on their educational systems and teacher education programmes. For example, an unexpected outflow of young emigrants, or a successful birth control campaign will relatively quickly reduce the number of teachers needed in the primary sector. Conversely, a baby boom will lead to a shortage of primary school teachers and the need to train new recruits for that sector. Later, as the baby boom children grow older and move to secondary schools, a new shortage is felt there, while teacher redundancies occur at the primary level. Similarly, an industrialisation drive will lead to the training and employment of trade school teachers who eventually may become redundant as industrial growth leads to less labour-intensive structures. Unlike large educational systems, a small organisation cannot absorb such fluctuations easily.

In view of the need for flexibility, small states might find it more efficient to develop initial teacher education programmes on the co-ordinated approach which prepares teachers to teach at more than one sector of the educational system. This approach, built within a modular structure, would, for example, train teachers to specialise in primary education as well as in one subject at secondary school level, or in one subject at secondary school level and another at trade school level. This co-ordinated approach provides the multiple teaching capacity so necessary in the rapidly fluctuating changes characteristic of small states. The modular structure can emphasise the strong educational theory and pedagogy basis of teacher education, and it

allows the student to specialise in the subject content that he or she desires, or to take up the subject area that the education system requires.

Another problem arises in small states in which a small total population is widely scattered. In such cases teachers are often called upon to teach a number of grades, and often the training they receive does not prepare them for multi-grade teaching. This can be a serious deficiency in the training programme for teachers in such countries.

Training specialised administrative personnel

Regardless of their size, states require a basic educational administrative set-up. A country of 100,000 inhabitants needs a ministry of education, education officers, a personnel section, a special education unit, an examinations branch, a maintenance team, etc., as would a country a hundred times larger. The actual number of people employed in the educational sector will be fewer in the smaller country, but the difference cannot be proportional to the number of inhabitants. As a result the financial cost and the demands on human resources of providing an educational (or medical, or legal) service are proportionately much higher in small states than in larger ones. As with the training of teachers in such contexts, a number of important issues arise.

Multiplicity of roles

Small states attempt, indeed are compelled, to extend their resources and lower per capita costs by having education officials and facilities act in a multi-purpose way. Thus, for example, the Director-General for Education often caters also for Culture and Sports, curriculum officers take responsibility for more than one subject area, teachers in secondary schools teach more than one speciality, while primary school teachers, as was previously mentioned, are called upon to give instruction on a multi-grade basis. In some countries, teachers extend their educational role to act as community development leaders.

The major drawback of the multi-purpose function of education

officials is that their work becomes extremely diffused when they have to switch from one role to another quickly and continuously. Curriculum planners, for instance, cannot simply concentrate on their subject speciality. They are called upon also to inspect teachers, run in-service courses, lecture at the initial teacher education institution, sit on purchasing committees, chair promotion panels, attend disciplinary boards, answer parliamentary questions, attend policy meetings, and sometimes teach their subject specialisation in one or two secondary schools. Such activities are bound to broaden their perspectives and widen their insights into the many facets of the educational system, rather than restrict their concerns to the narrow sphere of their specialisation. However, the necessity of sharing time and attention with many other aspects besides their main concerns can weaken the effectiveness of their expertise. The multiple-function role can also be draining on one's mental and physical energy since it involves changing rapidly from one task to the next, from one decision-making process to another, from dealing with one group of people to another in assignments that can be totally unrelated.

Furthermore, the professional development and personal lives of education officials acting in multi-purpose roles are often placed under great stress when they find it difficult to be away from their jobs to attend conferences or courses abroad, or simply to take their leave entitlement. They soon discover that if one or more assignments are not too pressing, there are always several others which are.

The better multi-functional officials are able to delegate work to their subordinates (when they have them) and allow themselves time for developmental planning and thinking out long-term strategies. They know that it is most tempting to spend all one's time dealing with many mundane *ad hoc* problems that have to be resolved 'now', and postpone the more complex and thought provoking issues to quieter moments, which never seem to become available.

The special demands on education officials and administrators in small states, particularly the need to work in a multiplicity of roles, seem to dictate the development of new patterns of professional training. The more appropriate are those of a multi-disciplinary

nature, structured on a modular system to reflect the adaptability and flexibility so characteristic of the official's work.

Training and retraining

The extremely limited number of education officials and administrators of the same category makes it economically unviable and academically impractical to provide specialist training locally. Overseas training offers an attractive alternative. Overseas centres offer specialist courses in a variety of subjects and the opportunity to mix with scholars and practitioners from other countries. Officials can upgrade qualifications, update specialisations and generally share ideas and exchange experiences with colleagues in similar posts. Overseas training promotes professional contacts and international personal friendships that usually continue throughout the participants' career. The experience of spending some time on overseas training is particularly beneficial to officials from small states who are prone more than those in bigger nations to suffer from isolation.

However, the problems that arise from overseas training cannot be overlooked. Such programmes are usually focused on preparing individuals for higher specialised roles, and can be unsuitable for education in small nation states where there are a multiplicity of professional roles to perform, often concurrently. Secondly, such training can lead to personal and professional expectations that can be fully realised only if accompanied by expensive ancillary support services which most small states cannot provide, or afford, or need. When this happens the level of institutional and personal frustrations is heightened, while the cost in time and money spent on the specialist training cannot be justified. Overseas training also cannot be justified when it is peripheral to the real needs of the small state, when it promotes alien attitudes and values which are at variance with the local, or when it increases the small state's dependency on foreign thought and technology to the detriment of indigenous alternatives.

In countries where the chances of promotion are few and far between the temporary absence of senior officials often proves professionally valuable to subordinates who wish to demonstrate

their initiative and drive. On the other hand, junior officials can be weary of temporary promotions and prefer the *laissez faire* attitude to carry out only routine measures. In the interval, development and progress in the sector concerned are slowed down and the longer the senior official is absent, the greater the period of stagnation. In spite of its potential limitations, however, officials and administrators from small states must break away from their isolated professional environment to attend courses, workshops and conferences abroad. It is not enough to keep abreast solely through the professional literature. This does not necessarily mean going to the economically developed countries where the socio-economic context surrounding education can be so different. Much can be learnt through the staff attending conferences or training programmes held in other small nation states.

Supportive team-work under the co-ordination or direction of a senior official appear to offer a better organisational structure to overcome most of the difficulties identified above. Understudies each responsible for several tasks, or an area of responsibility which is catered for by more than one junior official, provide supportive reinforcement as well as allowing individual members of the team to be away without loss of efficiency. Experience indicates that multi-functional co-operative teams are more likely to go on functioning efficiently when the leader or co-ordinator is away than when one area of responsibility is allocated to a single individual.

Professional motivation

Promotions in developing educational systems, especially those in small states, are closely related to the individuals obtaining scholarships for further training. The officials and administrators who gain scholarships for further studies tend to be the better qualified, the more enterprising, those who show evidence of industry and initiative. These very qualities, in addition to improved qualifications on their return, place them in the best position for promotion. On this basis the specialist subject teacher of a secondary school, for example, is likely to be the most qualified candidate and is promoted to headteacher, the audio-visual specialist applies and obtains a lectureship

at university, the curriculum planner becomes the director for secondary schools, etc. In most countries this process is in the nature of things. In large, educationally developed countries which have several officials within a particular specialisation the impact of such changes is imperceptible, indeed such movements are seen to provide a healthy cross-fertilisation within the system. In small states, the promotion of an official to another post often results in the loss of the only specialist in his or her previous post, an area which can become immobile until a new person is trained and the cycle starts all over again. There is a strong case for long-term planning, for a policy on multi-functional roles and for the creation of joint posts to minimise the detrimental effects of promotion and other organisational changes within small states.

The very scale of educational systems in small states seriously limits opportunities for promotion so that many capable and ambitious young men and women feel their chances of professional growth are stunted. Such feelings tend to be strongest on their return from scholarships overseas where the opportunities for research and academic fulfilment are more promising and where career advancement and remunerative rewards are more attractive than in their countries. It is difficult to prescribe solutions to the resulting clash between the personal aspirations of the individual and the needs of the nation. Personal guarantees for return can be imposed, and scholarship donating agencies or countries can refuse continued residence on the termination of the scholarship. However, such measures cannot ensure the commitment of the frustrated or professionally unsatisfied official. On the other hand, allowing such officials to terminate their obligations with impunity will encourage others to do the same. There do not seem to be easy solutions to this dilemma which is rendered more intricate by the social nature of each particular state.

Another source of frustration among educators in a small nation state arises from the promotion of individuals with strong political connections rather than outstanding professional performance. This happens in many countries, large or small, but because of the limited

number of job opportunities in the latter, such action can prove extremely depressing for the majority of education staff.

Regional co-operation

Regional co-operation in the professional development of educational personnel has great attractions for small states. Courses can be designed to meet the specific needs of the region and can develop content that ensures relevancy and the emphasis of a local bias. The co-ordinated utilisation of resources reduces costs and reinforces a sense of self-reliance. Overseas experts can still be brought in to contribute to training programmes, with the major advantage that more locals are exposed to them than if a few selected individuals are sent to study at the metropolis.

At the same time, the limitations and difficulties in promoting regional co-operation should not be overlooked for although the concept sounds good, its implementation can be problematic. For instance the setting up of a course can be most time-consuming and demanding on the already overworked officials of the small states with the result that it is often quicker, albeit shortsighted and costlier, to send candidates to established courses in metropolitan institutions. Also, sectoral interests and rivalries can inhibit the desired co-operation, while the concentration of the most qualified personnel at a regional centre depletes the national centres of their best people and resources. Most essential of all, to be successful, regional projects in education must gain the confidence and recognition of the participants and the local population at large. These often unwittingly undermine regional or local initiatives through the ex-colonial mentality that gives greater credence and value to activities and institutions of a foreign origin, even when local courses and projects produce better results.

And perhaps that is one of the major handicaps facing small states. They tend to have a strong national and cultural identity; and yet feeling small and vulnerable, they remain intellectually dependent on larger states. They see themselves as miniature models of the larger

nations and attempt to emulate them without fully realizing that as small states they have an ecology of their own. A general policy for the professional development of educational personnel in small states must reflect an acute awareness of the benefits and limitations of being small. A lack of this basic awareness often leads to rejected transplants.

4 The Development of Curriculum and Materials

A Caribbean view

Howard Fergus

Howard Fergus defines curriculum as the time-tabled programme of studies of a school or similar institution, as well as its so-called extra-curricular provisions. This includes objectives, content, teaching methods, evaluation techniques, and the way these interrelate to promote learning. He focuses on the components of the curriculum, the logistics of curriculum reform, the production of curriculum materials, and refers to the work of examining boards operating within a regional context. He pays special attention to the challenges and assets of smallness of scale and dependence, characteristics that help to define the context for development in the small states of the Commonwealth.

Sources of curriculum

The ultimate source of curriculum is culture in its broad anthropological sense. This is a dynamic concept embracing all aspects of the life of any social group. In the case of small nation states, one needs to include not only their history but also their continuing disabilities,

certain constraining self-perceptions, some of which derive from their size, and their thrust for independence. Furthermore, the efforts at, or rhetoric pertaining to, curriculum reforms include pronouncements on education by political leaders in these states, which clearly expect education to provide their emergent countries with the capacities and attitudes needed for development and the attainment of real sovereignty.

Many states have found it easier to continue with inherited notions of what is worthwhile knowledge than to respond to new curriculum imperatives based on an indigenous interpretation of culture. This has occurred because, apart from the inertia associated with education systems, small states lack the necessary finance to implement radical curriculum change; and even if they did not, they face the difficulty of breaking from the stranglehold of intellectual dependence on metropolitan countries. Elsewhere Farrugia has cited Malta as a case where the usual material dependence has been extended to the intellectual sphere.¹ This situation exists in most other small nation states. Their intellectual, and by implication, cultural dependence is deep and pervasive. Not only do these states depend on the metropolis for textbooks and ideas, but it is First World scholars who determine what counts for acceptable and legitimate knowledge. Little if any recognition has been given to indigenous and supposedly informal knowledge. The traditional knowledge of rural peoples in agriculture, cuisine, herbal remedies is largely ignored because it has not been built into the discourse of universities by metropolitan scholars. To relegate local culture entirely to informal processes is to send out powerful signals about its value and to perpetuate abject cultural and educational dependence. It is to be hoped that a main aim of curriculum development in these states would be to prepare people to function in their local environment with which they must increasingly identify. In other words, we must begin to correct some of the defects of metropolitan schooling. Revolution will not come in a flood, but the process of modification must begin.

It is not being suggested that disciplined knowledge be replaced in any of these societies. This is neither feasible nor logical. Most of them have a hybrid culture and the metropolitan component is ineradicable. Besides, the administrative elites in these states owe their position to their educational attainment, metropolitan style. They therefore have a vested interest in that kind of schooling and presumably would not like to see it radically altered. Furthermore, continuing dependence on overseas institutions for training and consultancy services serves to reinforce the metropolitan presence. The Euro-Western heritage is real, and so are the financial and practical problems involved in revolutionising curricula based on a totally new concept of organised knowledge. Moreover, the size and economic circumstances of these states are such that, though less so than previously, migration is a fact of life and this means that even though it is not admitted or deliberately pursued, they find themselves, to a greater or lesser extent, educating for export. In consequence, a sizeable number of the populace who migrate from small Commonwealth countries will be handicapped unless they attain some kind of universal academic minimum and internationally negotiable certificates.

One does not necessarily accept Paul Hirst's view that a given number of pre-determined forms of knowledge should constitute the content of education, even if one subscribes to the view that development of intellectual skills is at the heart of the educational enterprise. Mathematics, for instance, is a universal 'language game', a way of comprehending human experience not confined to any class or world group. This does not mean, however, that all the content of traditional subjects has to be copied from abroad. Further, not only should the peoples of the small nation states of the Commonwealth be taught their own history, but they should also be introduced to the history of selected peoples from other parts of the world. All students should be allowed to conduct an inquiry into their own history and culture. In this way, they will develop the skills of historical thinking and investigation by exercising their minds on matters of local relevance. This kind of exercise should lead students to question the

place and value of imported ideas and to put them in their proper perspective. Their curriculum content needs to reflect a new process of socialisation and the development of new attitudes to indigenous culture.

Language

Language, which is a crucial conduit of culture, merits consideration in any study of curriculum in the 'small' Commonwealth. All Caribbean countries have a creole or patois which, while being an adaptation of the European language, has an infusion of African words and African syntax and morphology. It is this language that the majority of the people use to express themselves, tell their stories, sing songs and generally negotiate their lives. Many children start school fluent in this language, but have difficulty acquiring proficiency in standard English. There are implications here for a language policy in this crucial area of communication. Curriculum development cannot ignore this potentially bilingual situation.

The position becomes more complex in the Pacific and Indian Ocean states. Mauritius's chequered colonial history has given her a rich language legacy. French is the main language of commerce and conversation; English the language of instruction and examination. In addition, there are Kreole and some Indian languages as well. A language policy both in Mauritius and the Caribbean has to take into account such matters as the need for at least one language for international communication, which language to introduce first, and whether bilingualism or trilingualism should be aimed at from the outset. In Western Samoa, Samoan has been made the language of schooling for the first seven years. Whatever decisions are made on these issues, the history, culture and creative potential of these languages must find their way into the curriculum. Local languages are important to the process of building a national identity in the quest for independence, and for moulding national cohesion. One must remember, however, that smallness of scale does not necessarily mean that the national linguistic structure is lacking in complexity. The case of Vanuatu testifies to that.

Creole English as a medium for creative writing has gained prominence in the Anglophone Caribbean, and has begun to move from the inferior status of 'broken English' associated with slaves and illiterates to the respectable position of 'nation language' as scholar-poet Edward Brathwaite styles it. It is important to the Caribbean culture of struggle and survival. The literature, whether oral or written, which results from work in Creole, is a powerful unearther of experience as well as being richly entertaining. These pieces must find their way into the curriculum at all levels and teachers and children should themselves be encouraged to use this creative medium.

In the South Pacific, language teaching and learning are more problematic. Some countries have several vernaculars and the pidgin sometimes differs radically from the metropolitan language. The principle of facility in the vernacular language still applies although a choice may have to be made and also a decision has to be made as to whether vernacular literacy should precede introduction to the metropolitan language. In the Seychelles, the single vernacular or Kreole has been made the medium of learning in primary schools. In the quest for bilingualism, smallness may well be an asset as far as unit cost is concerned.

Technical literacy

Manpower needs, even in small island states, are regarded as an important determinant of curriculum. The distinction between manpower needs and culture is an artificial one and is made here for convenience since the economic system is a component of culture. A main aim of curriculum reform in small island states is to provide the economy with skills needed for its functioning and expansion. Vocational and technical training is supposed to be given at least parity of emphasis with literary and academic learning. This stance seems eminently reasonable for it seems to make more sense to teach agriculture rather than Shakespeare to rural people. Caution is however urged. With few exceptions, the small nation states tend to have open economies and a narrow range of economic activities. A

major object of economic planning is the attraction of foreign investors. This means that major economic decisions are made outside the country as well as decisions about the technology that will be employed. Manpower prediction becomes very unreliable in such circumstances. In any case, given the limited range of occupations available in most small states it may not be expedient to spend too much of their limited resources on the expensive equipment needed for job-specific training. Specific job skills risk becoming obsolete as the investment environment changes and economic emphasis shifts. One of the elements missing from the delivery system of many of these small states is a defined job market that stays in focus long enough to enable curriculum planners to make contact with it.

In view of this, what may be termed as technical literacy and vocational orientation is recommended for school systems in these states. Technical literacy subsumes general literacy, by which is meant the acquisition of a functional level of basic academic skills - the ability to compute, comprehend and manipulate verbal and mathematical symbols.

Technical literacy does not preclude training for job skills based on training needs identified as immediate and imminent, so to some extent the manpower planning exercise is still necessary. But it should be used as a guide and revised periodically to capture new trends in the economy and the employment market. The training to be provided can take place either in multi-purpose technical colleges or on-the-job or both. With the high cost of technical education in a society with a limited population it might be more productive for employers to be actively involved in the training or in the funding of technical and vocational education. This can take the form of levies, day releases and the funding of workers' training in adult learning settings. On-the-job training releases funds for investment in the economy or for funding other areas of human resource development such as health. Industry and education institutions should share resources.

Technical and vocational literacy and general academic development serve another vital purpose. Because of the unstable

employment situation in small states, rigid training specialisms are not advocated. Persons have to be educated to respond readily to training in a number of areas as economic circumstances dictate. These fragile economies with their shifting job markets warrant the training of creative and versatile citizens or 'polyvalent' persons as they have come to be known. This approach is now one of necessity in a situation that is perhaps even more unpredictable for small economies than for their larger counterparts.

Participation in social and political life

The management and maintenance of independence require the development in citizens of socio-political skills, and this is just as true in small states. This is an important part of the cultural landscape of the ex-colonial Commonwealth and is therefore important in curriculum planning. The political relations of the small states to metropolitan powers, old and new, is the nexus for so much of the continuing colonial freight which they carry, including the psychology of dependence and the feeling that what is foreign is best. The term socio-political defines skills associated with civic values, nation building and community commitment which are intended to prepare students for participation in social and political life and to foster national identity and self-reliance. Children need to learn to identify with the national heritage if political independence is to lead to real sovereignty. If schools can build this kind of sense of identity and commitment whether through social studies, environmental studies, history, language or whatever appropriate subject, perhaps the momentum of the brain drain, an endemic problem of small states might be minimised.

The aesthetic sense

The creative arts are also a crucial aspect of a people's culture, whether in small or large states, sounding as they do the human spirit, capturing subliminal yearnings and aspirations, expressing feelings, and nurturing sensitivity and the creative urge. Every child should be

encouraged to practice or appreciate at least one art form. The arts will open up new and creative avenues of personal enjoyment and this is welcome in an era of cultural penetration in the form of imported television and films, some of which do not enhance sensibility, the photography apart.

The development of an aesthetic sense therefore has to be an aim of these education systems. And the arts need not be confined to classes labelled drama, music, painting and so on. The aesthetic can infuse subjects such as woodwork, metalwork, literature and home economics where it takes the form of designing, arrangement, colour, texture and creative writing as the case may be.

It seems so easy in these relatively poor countries to jettison subjects which do not appear to contribute directly to the economy. This tendency is reinforced by some aid agencies which evince a lopsided concept of development. While one does not wish to see the arts vulgarised to present them for mass merchandising, they have real earning potential especially for tourism. And those who develop proficiency in the arts add another dimension to the polyvalence which has been recommended as a desirable quality of the 'small Commonwealth man'. In its bid to promote pluri-cultural Mauritianism, the Cultural Division of the Mauritius Ministry of Education plans to develop certain components of the culture including drama, fine arts, music, dance and folk art. This is a useful model. It does not mean that our arts have to be totally inward-looking. It does mean that they must be anchored in the culture whatever the varying strands are and they must have internal consistency, honesty and dynamism. The arts should be practised in every school.

Moral awareness

Religion is rooted in the colonial culture of all Commonwealth states, including the smallest ones, and has become a central part of people's lives. The teaching of one or even two dominant religions is fraught with problems, especially in small multi-ethnic countries and communities. Schools can, however, draw on the study of

various religions as a base for the exploration of ethical and moral issues. The aim would be to enhance moral awareness rather than to give religious instructions in the traditional sense.

Curriculum content

From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that at least six categories of skills and knowledge should be included in the curriculum of small Commonwealth states. These are:

- basic academic skills with special considerations given to language
- technical and vocational literacy
- life skills
- aesthetic skills
- socio-political skills
- moral awareness skills

Basic academic skills are those skills which enable students to acquire literacy, numeracy, the ability to comprehend and to think logically. Consideration of a language policy is logically linked with a consideration of academic skills. There should be fluency in a metropolitan language, and where opportunity warrants, as in Mauritius, there might be fluency in two. This leaves more options open to the country for international intercourse. Ancestral languages should be developed as a teaching and learning medium and books written in them. Pedagogical and cultural considerations will help to decide at what point each language is introduced.

Like general literacy, technical literacy is preparatory and foundational. Emphasis will, generally speaking, be on industrial arts, commercial arts, agriculture, machine and building skills at an introductory level and the teaching of relating English, mathematics and science.

Life skills build on technical and vocational literacy by giving students a range of skills which will lead to employment after school.

These are likely to be in commerce, industry, agriculture, art and craft, and hotel work, but the mix depends on the country. The life skills programmes should also have a practical bias. It may make more sense to use farmers to teach farming than teachers who are not qualified to demonstrate its viability as a life skill.

Aesthetic skills can be developed through music, dance, drama, creative writing, sculpture and painting, but an aesthetic sense can be fostered through other curriculum subjects. An aim is to develop talent and this means identifying students who need interaction with practising artists and further training. The investigation of folklore and all kinds of indigenous aesthetic expressions should be given special attention.

An aim of socio-political skills is to prepare students for democratic participation in the social and political life of their countries. To do this successfully, they will need to internalise certain values such as self-reliance, patriotism and co-operation. These skills and values can be taught through social studies and other subjects, but are more effective if opportunities are provided for practising them. Expedients such as school councils, work and study, and co-operatives have been tried but without resounding success. Each country must decide what will work, but the principle of actual involvement is a sound one. It is important too, for the school to demonstrate these values in its own operation if students are to adopt them.

The aim of moral awareness is to make students morally mature and balanced in their response to emotive social issues such as abortion, drugs, religious tolerance, war, racism, sex and attitudes to authority. Although moral awareness implies adopting positions and forming attitudes, children can be encouraged to base their beliefs on data and rational inquiry. As with socio-political skills, the ambience of the school and its mode of operating can contribute to the moral maturation of students.

A concluding comment on content seems necessary. In order to facilitate the production of flexible and versatile persons to cope with the uncertainties of employment in many small states, a certain

degree of curriculum integration will be necessary. This does not mean the seamless coat versus distinctive and discrete form argument, although some kind of integration in related knowledge fields such as the sciences may be useful as a means of studying topics in agriculture, nutrition, health and so on. What is being referred to is the assembling of a range of units or modules to enable students to readily acquire multiple skills and knowledge. A student may wish to add some carpentry to plumbing for instance, since that may have a better pay-off than rigid specialisation. This kind of curriculum integration articulates well with technical and vocational literacy and is ideal for the training of the polyvalent handyman.

The role of examinations

Any discussion on reducing the dependency of small nation states leads inevitably to a consideration of the role of overseas examination systems. Examinations, particularly at the secondary level, have determined curriculum instead of the other way round. Local examination systems have to be part of any profound curriculum change. Financial considerations apart, this is not always an easy exercise. A certificate from abroad has an orthodoxy that confers prestige and is proof that the possessor has been able to emulate successfully his metropolitan mentor. And the imperatives of migration and overseas study make it desirable to have academic credentials with wide international currency.

The barriers are not insuperable. The West African Examinations Council has led the way. The Solomon Islands replaced Cambridge 'O' levels with an internal examination some years ago; and New Zealand has assisted South Pacific countries to set up a South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment (SPBEA). Some dependence at the tertiary and even higher secondary level is inevitable, but 'O' level-type examinations must be set locally or regionally if learning is to be localised.

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) provides 'O' level-type (the use of the term 'O' level illustrates our abiding

dependence) examinations for all of the Commonwealth Caribbean states in the region. Their relative socio-cultural homogeneity and similarity of economic profile facilitate co-operation, although geographically they are dispersed. The CXC is worthy of study as a model not only of co-operation among regional states, and between states and multiple aid agencies, but also in its particular design as an examining body. Worthy of note is the way in which it has developed and utilised a pool of expertise in curriculum development, moderating and evaluating examinations across the region. Its conception of curriculum innovation and teacher training as integral aspects of the task of a local examining body has important lessons for small states.

The CXC benefits from economies of scale, but unit costs are still high. This is because large numbers of students continue to write overseas examinations. The CXC has itself approached overseas universities to secure acceptability of its certificates. Its syllabi stimulate valuable mental activity and its examinations are less amenable to rote learning. In short, the CXC examinations are, if anything, superior to those being replaced. This is important if new examining bodies are to capture the entire local market, and this is necessary to ensure their economic viability. For if CXC were to become dependent on outside aid, it would no longer be an independent force.

The first indigenous examining bodies tested academic subjects. This reflects the bookish nature of the received school curriculum. Bodies such as City and Guilds, are devised for highly developed industrialised countries and they cannot adequately serve local needs. Local examining boards need to address the examining of technical subjects in these states. This would allow technical education programmes to be closely aligned with local manpower needs. Moreover, if we continue to expend so much effort and scarce resources on examinations which at best test only about the 'top' twelve per cent of our children, then we are sending out powerful signals about how we regard technical training vis-a-vis academic training unless there is a counterbalancing mechanism. By creating two levels of

examinations, the general proficiency which is roughly equal to the traditional 'O' level and the basic proficiency, the CXC manages to provide certification for more students than do the overseas boards. Even so, a large number of students capable of acquiring valuable practical skills escape the examining and certification net.

Strategy for change

Education is but one of many social forces in operation in a society whether it be large or small. It affects and is affected by the other forces that are at work in a dynamic interplay. Too often, education by itself is expected to revolutionise a society. This is more likely to take place if the entire society is progressive and forward looking. Beeby was right in suggesting that curriculum reform was more likely to succeed in a milieu of modernisation conducted by a strong political leader. At the very least, high priority has to be given to curriculum change in government policy. Once the policy for reform is agreed on as a national policy, similar logistical activities have to be undertaken as would be carried out in a larger state. Ministries of education should, however, ensure that the goals of reform are realistic and that it has general public acceptability and support. It is important also to ensure that adequate resources and an appropriate structure are in place to carry out the reform. In small states, the dependence on, and integration with, metropolitan systems may be so deep and the financial resources may be such that incremental rather than fundamental change may be more feasible. The objectives and scope may be narrower, but the success may well be greater.

After these preliminary, but important decisions are made, a national curriculum committee representing wide community interests should be set up. Civil groups, chambers of commerce and industry, arts guilds, teachers associations, parent-teacher associations, and tertiary education are only some that spring to mind. When a government issues a policy or statement of intent on curriculum reform, it should be the job of such a committee or council to elaborate this into broad goals. This committee should keep the

curriculum and its design under periodic review, suggesting changes in the light of evaluation. It should possess the competence to analyse the national culture from time to time and develop criteria for dropping subjects and determining new ones. It should also ensure that the new curricula have the potential to achieve standards at least as high as the old. This is important for popular acceptability especially in small states where people are so preoccupied with the exchange rate of their education on the overseas market.

The actual details of developing curricula should be left to a curriculum unit in the ministry which will set up subject panels. In very small states, this could be the work of a curriculum co-ordinator who co-opts colleagues and teachers. The panels themselves should be made up of teachers, academics and informed lay persons. Lay teacher involvement is critical to any model of curriculum change used; and academics are needed to ensure the validity of the knowledge content in curricula. Government enthusiasm for and commitment to reform must not lead to imposition of curriculum from the top.

The model suggested here is an interactive one. The term interactive is preferred since it better reflects the reality of the power distribution in the curriculum engineering enterprise. Community representatives can and should help to determine what is taught to their young, but it is the teachers who have the greatest control over the *de facto* curriculum.

Lay involvement in curriculum development in these states is particularly crucial since in many of them change had tended to come by administrative fiat. Even when School Boards were used to advise governments, membership was restricted to the politico-economic dominants. Lay people at all levels of society who fund the schools and share in the culture should make a contribution to the dialogue on what knowledge is of most worth for the society. If community representatives share in curriculum decision-making, they have to share in the accountability as well. Indeed, at the secondary level, students are mature enough to understand the thinking behind curriculum change and can also be involved in the curriculum debate.

Teachers must be assigned a central role in curriculum development. They should participate in discussions at the national and institutional levels, dealing with specific objectives of curriculum, its content, and determining learning activities and developing evaluative techniques. Teachers are the most important agents in the change process, especially in societies where they probably make up the largest body of high level manpower. Their attitudes, perceptions and skills are pivotal to successful curriculum development. But they are likely to be even more conservative in small developing states than in the developed North. Their involvement is itself a re-educative process and it will help to guarantee their commitment to change. Curriculum is not just a change of syllabi and materials, it is a change of people, particularly teachers. To ensure that this change occurs, in-service training specifically linked to the new curricula has to be provided, and given the comparatively high incidence of untrained teachers in small states and the usually rapid teacher turnover rates, teachers' guides and workbooks should be produced to secure effective curriculum implementation and a measure of continuity.

When a new curriculum is formulated, it should be tried before diffusion in the whole system. Important for all countries, this is critical in small states which cannot afford waste and misdirected reform. Implementation will be actually aided by smallness provided also there is a high degree of compactness. Consultants who researched the situation in Montserrat to see how best that country could abolish the Common Entrance at the end of primary school and create a comprehensive system, were able to consult all the key people who would have to implement the system.² This would be near impossible not only in a large country, but also in 'small' archipelago states such as the Solomon Islands and the Seychelles. Any proposed model has to be treated flexibly in states with a high degree of internal isolation, and communication problems. Consultation should proceed at the grassroots from an early stage to ensure that local socio-cultural factors are reflected in the curriculum.

Smallness of scale and dependency obviously make radical, locally oriented curriculum change difficult to achieve in small states.

It is up to each small state to modify continually its metropolitan curriculum legacy in whatever ways local circumstances suggest and permit. The cost of curriculum materials is another deterrent. But meaningful curriculum change can occur if it is given support at the top of the administration in small states.

Developing curriculum materials

This section draws heavily on Caribbean experience. The development of curriculum materials including text books is an integral aspect of curriculum renewal. Dependence on metropolitan countries for curricula and examinations led to a corresponding dependence on texts originating overseas. When Slinger Francisco (Sparrow), the Caribbean calypso laureate, sang lines like: 'Dan is the man in the van'; 'Mr Mike goes to school on a bike'; 'The cow jumped over the moon'; it was the triteness and irrelevance of curriculum content and materials that he was satirising. He was implying that it was difficult for children to identify with the content of their text books. Apart from considerations of identity and self-concept, good pedagogy requires that students' lives and culture be treated in the books from which they are taught. Besides, the trade in imported learning materials meant a continual loss of money to small states. Serious attention began to be given to the problem in the Caribbean after the start of the independence era which may be dated as 1961. Efforts to produce materials locally were, however, limited by lack of funds, technical skills and equipment.

The larger and then more affluent small states made a start by producing supplementary materials and text books in a few subjects at the primary level. These are usually cheaper to produce than books and at the same time, they provide opportunities for the development of some of the skills needed in book production. Some countries set up production units, and in others the education office co-operated with the media unit to produce teaching materials. To cope with problems related to lack of finance and skills, they collaborated with international publishers. This particular strategy allows for some control over book content.

The establishment of the CXC which took curriculum reform seriously, gave added impetus to the production of books to support new syllabi. New areas of content were required to be taught for which no related support materials were available for general distribution. In the history syllabus, for example, two of the themes were: Art Forms in the Caribbean and Religion as a Social Force. There was very little material available on these in a form that was readily assimilable. These and other new areas of knowledge stimulated writing and research of varying quality.

With a quick commercial eye, metropolitan publishers with their experience, expertise and efficient marketing mechanisms, swooped onto the market. Some texts were speedily produced without or with only minimal guidance of CXC curriculum developers and without the collaboration of Caribbean scholars and teachers. As a result, books with distorted and stereotyped views and outdated information have found their way into the hands of children. Other more responsible publishers, as well as exercising better business acumen, enlisted the services of Caribbean scholars and teachers, some of whom have been closely associated with the development of the new syllabi. As a result, a number of creditable books are extant. Of even greater significance is the fact that a number of teachers' associations have produced mimeographed supplementary materials and launched journals with the specific aim of publishing materials to assist teachers to teach new syllabi. Some articles illustrate the working of new marking and moderation schemes, and demonstrate how some unfamiliar topics can be taught, and some give bibliographic guides.

A study of these pioneering efforts in the Caribbean as well as in other parts of the 'small' Commonwealth, together with a consideration of the needs and disabilities of small states, yield insights for certain proposals regarding the development of curriculum materials. These relate mainly to the use of local materials, the training and utilisation of local personnel, and regional and international co-operation.

It is becoming established for a curriculum project to include

the production of teachers' guides and texts as part of the general diffusion phase. Over the past few years, for instance, a USAID primary education project has been on stream in the Commonwealth Eastern Caribbean small states. Active consideration is now being given to the publication of supporting texts. This should become the pattern in all such projects involving small states.

In order to co-ordinate and facilitate properly the production of materials some minimal staff is needed. Ideally, the curriculum unit should have a production arm; but where this is not financially feasible, a graphic artist should be employed to work with selected teachers. Graphic information and pictorial messages are important to curriculum materials. Authors as well as illustrators should be deeply involved in the environment. Teachers should therefore be periodically released to assist with materials production. They are the ones qualified professionally to decide on the kind of material - students' worksheets, illustrative materials, stimulus pieces and diagrams - that will reinforce the skills that are to be learned. They can also help to ensure local relevance and potential for the attainment of national objectives.

Workshops should be planned to enable selected teachers to learn to produce teaching materials from materials available in the environment. Cartons, tins, food wrappers, seeds can all be put to use. Sierra Leone has successfully utilised local environmental materials in developing teaching materials; and Guyana has developed some expertise in the production of science equipment to aid learning. At the same time, these teachers can be taught the use of simple machines which greatly aid the processes of production and reproduction. Many multi-purpose machines are on the market and curriculum units should be equipped with some to facilitate their work.

Regional co-operation in materials production can help to offset the problems of scale and, where applicable, penury of small states. This can take the form of sharing expertise especially in the field of arts related to material and book production. This has the advantage of having specialists who share cultural backgrounds and assumptions with the recipient territory. Sharing can also take the

form of joint production of materials to support regional syllabi and also joint production of books. Mathematics, science and English book series, for instance, lend themselves to such co-operation. Localisation of curriculum does not necessarily or ideally mean total exclusion of other cultures, especially the cultures of neighbours with whom one shares historical experiences. Regional themes and issues can be captured in curriculum and curriculum materials.

Independence in materials production in small states is not envisaged in the medium run, although much can be achieved by setting up regional publishing houses. As a matter of policy, international publishers should work in collaboration with local ministries of education when they are producing for the small states' markets. It is critical for local teachers and educators and scholars to control and direct the content of teaching materials. However, in a free market situation, it is difficult to ensure this. So where textbooks are independently put on the market by international commercial publishers, local scholars and educators must be vigilant, reviewing the material and providing guidance on its value and use.

Aid agencies can assist in materials production by funding training to give teachers, writers and artists the skills needed. This can often be done on a regional basis. It is becoming standard practice for curriculum development projects to include a materials production component. This is welcome for books, visual aids, equipment and other materials are as much a part of curriculum development as is related teacher training.

Concluding comment

Curriculum in small states should be rooted in local culture and concerns. These concerns include facilitating social and economic development and employment generation. But one has to be careful about the assumptions that are made about the relationship between a particular brand of education and employment opportunities in open and flexible economies. Education should give everyone

fundamental academic skills and broadened technical and pre-vocational training, among other things. The guiding principles are vision and versatility. Like the curriculum itself, curriculum materials must reflect local culture, imagery, symbolisms and values. In reinforcing learning, 'reading' at least helps to make the man. Polyvalent man must also be Caribbean man, South Pacific man, or Southern African man as the case may be.

References

- 1 Farrugia, C (1985) *Impact of Scale, Isolation and Development in Malta*, paper submitted to the Pan-Commonwealth Experts Meeting on Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth, Mauritius
- 2 Bray, M; Fenton, M; Fergus, H; Ratcliffe, M (May 1985) *Secondary Education in Montserrat: A Report on the Potential for Expansion and Restructure*

5 Curriculum Development in Pacific Island Countries

With specific reference to Tonga

Konai Thaman

Konai Thaman draws on a decade of experience as a curriculum consultant and teacher educator at the University of the South Pacific following service as a teacher in her native Tonga. Her comments emphasise the necessity for small countries to utilise their scarce professional resources to the full in meeting the challenge of national curriculum renewal. In the island nations of the South Pacific it is clearly important to utilise teachers in curriculum development in a way that large systems, with their more diversified and specialised service may find inappropriate or unmanageable. This may be conceived as a benefit of smallness of scale. It sets challenges for establishing ways of working which advance the professional development of teachers through the utilisation of their experience and skills, whilst maintaining their day-to-day teaching duties. For most teachers these are new roles for which they have received little or no professional development.

Konai Thaman sets these observations in the context of the external component of curriculum development upon which all the small countries of the South Pacific are dependent, be it in terms of

finance, materials or expertise. Drawing on the experience of the Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project, she outlines a model for the successful integration of resources utilising local skills, the ministry of education, the regional university and external aid donors. The Project is examined against a wider Pacific background in which many educational innovations have failed or only been partially successful because they have had an over-ambitious time frame and a lack of realism about the capacity of small systems of education to manage information, materials and people in ways thought to be appropriate by external agencies.

Characteristics of curriculum development in the South Pacific

There are two important characteristics of curriculum development in the South Pacific, and in many other small nation states. They are related, and to some extent mutually supportive:

- 1 The central role played by the national ministry of education in determining curriculum content; and
- 2 The strong impact of external influences in the curriculum development process.

The central ministry of education is directly responsible for, and controls the content of, the education offered in schools. Central government tries to ensure that the curriculum reflects the overall objectives of the educational system. The process invariably begins by the ministry appointing curriculum teams, panels or committees, which are usually comprised of teachers, officials and curriculum co-ordinators and administrators. Curriculum materials are produced, first for trial, and subsequently for wider adoption. The overall responsibility for this activity falls directly with a senior officer of the ministry of education or with an individual appointed to direct curriculum change. In some states there may be a curriculum

development unit. Through these agencies, the ministry of education produces not only a subject-based curriculum but also supplementary materials, including pupil and teacher guides. This contrasts with a system-based model where curriculum developers may produce guidelines and the teachers are left to determine the details of what to teach in their own particular grades.

Most such curriculum development projects have been, or are, externally funded and/or administered. In the South Pacific there are a number of external aid sources involved, notably the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the Government of Australia; and the Government of New Zealand.

Teachers as curriculum developers

The need to involve teachers in curriculum development and the implications of this for teacher education, and general policy relating to conditions of service, are significant issues in the Pacific island countries.

In the South Pacific, the curriculum development task has fallen squarely on the shoulders of practising teachers. Their active role in designing and producing curriculum materials and implementing them has not only been encouraged, but, in some countries, demanded by educational authorities. Consequently, the preparation of teachers is of critical importance if the exhortations of educational administrators are to make any sense.

The active role of teachers in the process of curriculum development became increasingly obvious in the early 1970s. This was mainly associated with the UNDP/Unesco Secondary Curriculum Project (1970-75), a regional project funded by UNDP with its headquarters at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) School of Education. Curriculum materials for junior secondary schools in several subjects were researched, designed and written by regional curriculum teams, made up primarily of teachers who were either in schools or had been seconded to national curriculum units. Furthermore, the Project insisted on an active role by teachers in each

country, in the preparation of local units to complement the 'core' units prepared as a result of regional curriculum seminars and workshops.

At the end of the Project in 1975, some countries continued curriculum work according to their own styles and resources. Whatever happened in each country, it became obvious that teachers were being drawn into the centre of curriculum development in a very practical way.

In Western Samoa, for example, a new secondary teachers' college was set up in 1980 to provide among other things, '... a detailed curriculum development programme...', and its staff was charged with the '... responsibility for leading teacher committees in the preparation of curriculum suited to the objectives of the [new] evolving [secondary] schools'.¹

In the Solomon Islands, the Secretary for Education, in a paper presented to a national curriculum workshop said, 'We're not only permitting but demanding that they [teachers] get involved in curriculum decision-making'. Curriculum work in the Solomons is currently being carried out by curriculum teams, consisting mostly of teachers, working with overseas consultants predominantly from Australia.

In Tonga, the Senior Education Officer-in-Charge of the Curriculum Development Unit, A.M. Taufe'ulungaki, writing about curriculum work in that country, said, 'The most interesting aspect [of the New Maths curriculum] is the attempt to involve teachers in all stages of the curriculum development process'.²

In Kiribati, teachers were actively involved in curriculum writing workshops which have been organised during recent years under the Kiribati Project, funded by ADAB and executed by the Salisbury College of Advanced Education in Australia, in co-operation with USP's Institute of Education.

Recently a Minister of Education in Fiji, in an address to the Fiji Principals' Association, stated, in relation to the development of new curriculum materials for senior high schools that, 'The staff of the Curriculum Development Unit would prepare curriculum materials

in partnership with teachers in schools'. He also stressed the need for Fiji teachers to be able to adjust and adapt to [new] curriculum changes as, '...the country could not afford to retrain its teachers every time there is a major curriculum change'.³

It is therefore clear that Pacific Island teachers are not only required to utilise new curriculum materials but also to produce and test them.

The Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project

There are several examples of curriculum development projects in which teachers are actively involved. They include regional projects, such as the UNDP/Unesco/IOE-USP Vocational Curriculum Project, and national projects such as the Kiribati Language Project, Tuvalu Language Project, Kiribati Project, Western Samoa Secondary Curriculum Project and the Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project. The last named will be used as a case study through which to test the reality against the model.

The Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project (TSCP) began in 1976 for the purpose of developing curriculum materials for junior secondary schools. A year earlier, when the UNDP/Unesco Regional Curriculum Project finished, there was a lot still to be done in the production of new materials, as well as in revising or replacing existing materials. Following a report by a New Zealand curriculum team in 1975, the New Zealand Government agreed to fund the new project out of its regional aid (but now under bilateral aid arrangements), with the USP's Institute of Education (IOE) being the executing agency. This means that the Tongan authorities submit their plans and requests to the Institute, which facilitates the requests. Such requests range from the provision of subject curriculum consultants to the acquisition of items of hardware and software.

The curriculum consultants are drawn from the academic staff of the University of the South Pacific or from other parts of the Pacific, including New Zealand. They are either requested directly by the Education Department, Tonga, or recommended by IOE and approved by Tonga. All financial transactions are handled by the USP

Bursary. All requests for funds by the Tonga Curriculum Development Project are fulfilled by the Bursar on the advice of the Director of the Institute of Education.

The procedure follows the Tonga Secondary Curriculum Model in which the work of writing and revising curriculum materials is the responsibility of a local subject curriculum committee, consisting of a co-ordinator (from the Ministry of Education) plus about five or six subject teachers who represent the different school systems in Tonga. This committee works closely with an Institute of Education consultant, not only in the materials production area, but also in the in-service training of teachers in trial schools. All curriculum writing workshops are held in Tonga, and in-service teacher training sessions are held in the three main centres - Nuku'alofa, Lifuka and Neiafu - before new materials are trialled.

The usual procedure is to send the new curriculum units to the executive of the appropriate subject teachers' association for their comments before they go to the National Curriculum Committee for approval. This committee consists mainly of secondary school principals. The units are released for trialling in schools after approval by the Ministry of Education.

By 1982, local prescriptions and curriculum materials had been prepared in the areas of Social Science, English, Industrial Arts and Home Economics. There were setbacks in the area of Commercial Studies with the departure of the University consultant. However, the Regional UNDP/Unesco/IOE Vocational Curriculum Project (based at the USP) took over the work in this area in 1983.

Between 1982 and the present, much of the curriculum work of the Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project has been in the development of curriculum materials for Forms 3 to 5 English. All schools in Tonga are now using the Form 3 books produced by the Project, and by 1986 Form 4 books were available to all schools. The trialling of Form 5 English materials began early in 1986.

It appears that the intention of the Ministry of Education for 1986-90 is to develop further materials in Science, Mathematics, History, Geography, Agriculture and Tongan Studies. The vocational

subjects, Industrial Arts, Home Economics and Commercial Studies are now the responsibility of the UNDP Regional Project (UNDP/ Unesco/ IOE), and work in producing and trialling new materials in that area is underway.

The Tonga project has several features which seem attractive from the host country's point of view when one compares it to other externally assisted projects. These are:

- 1 Curriculum materials are prepared and used by teachers who are familiar with the schools and communities from which pupils come.
- 2 Consultants from the regional university are also familiar with local conditions. Most of them are involved in the pre-service as well as the in-service preparation of the teachers who will eventually use the materials. In Tonga, for example, in Social Science, pre-service and in-service teacher education students at the University participated in curriculum materials production through their curriculum studies courses. The same students, upon graduation, continued their involvement in curriculum development either as members of subject curriculum committees or as resource persons during in-service courses organised by the Curriculum Development Unit.
- 3 Training in curriculum development for curriculum officers was carried out on-the-job, through short courses, as well as some initial practical attachments with the Institute of Education. While on attachment, curriculum officers spent part of their time preparing materials, part on teacher education courses in curriculum studies. Some teachers from outer islands and remote rural schools were able to participate in these courses. For many of these teachers these were the first in-service courses they had attended since taking up their teaching responsibilities - over ten years in some cases.

- 4 Funding for the project is concentrated in Tonga. With many externally assisted projects much of the aid remains in, or goes back to, the donor country in one form or another, but in this case most of the aid money is spent in Tonga. For example, apart from consultant travel, which amounted to just over 10 per cent of the total expenditure in 1984, all other expenses were incurred in-country, mainly in printing costs. This picture is quite atypical when compared with some projects where most of the expenditure is usually on consultancy fees/travel/per diems, often provided for by the donor country itself.

Because of the relative success of the TSCP model, a regional curriculum development project which began in 1982 adopted the Tonga model. This regional project has a full-time co-ordinator and secretary, based at USP. Using consultants from the USP, Australia and New Zealand, curriculum materials production is the responsibility of national curriculum teams. This facilitates national identity in curriculum development. There is, moreover, a vital element of on-the-job training for curriculum workers as well as an important attempt at national institution building, through the provision of hardware and software to local curriculum development units.

Implications for the management of curriculum change

Experience with the TSCP has brought to light issues which many small island countries have to address.

Political considerations

In the Pacific Islands, curriculum development projects provide one indicator of how countries are trying to meet the challenges of independence and decolonisation. Together with other indicators, such as national airlines, universities, and television stations, politicians in particular see national curriculum and examinations as ways of decolonising education systems. As such, curriculum development

needs to take into consideration internal politics as well as the politics of overseas aid. The national selection of particular trial schools is just as important as decisions of funding agencies or donor countries; both affect, in their own ways, the outcomes of a project.

Furthermore, the dependence on overseas services may work against the identification of curriculum development problems. It is unlikely, for example, that education officials, teachers and curriculum developers will be critical, particularly if aid donors or sponsors are strong advocates of a project. Some steps which may help alleviate such problems would be to relax somewhat on the duration of curriculum projects, thus relieving the pressure to obtain quick results; to concentrate more on the realities of implementing the reform rather than the theories of curriculum design; and to place evaluation in the hands of teachers, who know whether or not something works well at the school level.

Planning and implementation

Many curriculum projects in the small island nations of the Pacific lack what curriculum experts refer to as high 'a priori explicitness'; in other words, an administrative plan charged with setting out the desired conditions in terms of personnel, materials and organisation. Perhaps such explicitness may not be desirable in the small island countries, given the high staff turnover rates experienced, especially in the curriculum development area. Because of the small pool of qualified personnel that exists in many of the Pacific education systems, it would be very difficult, and perhaps undesirable, to make implementation dependent on a rigid set of conditions. In Tonga the retraining approach has had to be the one used, otherwise the process of curriculum development would have been long delayed.

Teacher education

Teacher education programmes, especially pre-service (primary), do not always keep pace with what is happening in curriculum development. For example, in a survey of teacher-training programmes in Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa, published in 1978, the lack of

courses relating to curriculum theory and practice was highlighted.

Most teacher education programmes are traditional in the sense that they assume a definition of the teacher's role which concentrates on classroom. Important though this role is, the curriculum changes of the 1970s not only required a new style of teaching (one which went beyond rote learning, to questioning and child-centred discovery activities) but also the involvement of teachers in translating curriculum guidelines into learning experiences, and the evaluation of these activities. It is vital that current teacher education programmes provide future teachers with training and support that go beyond what they do in the classroom.

This need was recognised by teacher educators at USP. In 1976, courses in curriculum theory and practice were introduced into the B.Ed and Post-Graduate Certificate of Education programmes. Methods courses were modified and renamed Curriculum Studies courses. The two courses on curriculum theory and practice required students to research, write, trial and evaluate curriculum units in selected schools in Suva, Fiji, and both pre- and in-service teacher trainees produced curriculum units related to their respective countries' curriculum plans. Some of these were later incorporated into the curriculum materials which were being prepared in Fiji and Tonga.

Since 1980, an increasing number of countries in the South Pacific have taken responsibility for the pre-service training of secondary school teachers. It is to be hoped that the curriculum role of teachers will be an important consideration in their planning. The integration of curriculum development and teacher training is of vital consideration for small island states.

Resources

Lack of time and insufficient supply of materials were two problems often commented on by teachers implementing the Tonga Social Science curriculum for Forms 3 and 4. Although pre-trial workshops were always held in order to familiarise teachers with new methods and materials, no in-country programmes existed in which all

teachers were familiarised prior to national implementation. In many curriculum projects in the Pacific, the time in which a particular curriculum is expected to be produced and implemented is unrealistically short. For example, the UNDP/Unesco/IOE Vocational Curriculum Project was initially for two years; it normally takes that long just to produce new materials for one level, let alone trial them. One can understand the immediacy of the need for change in small newly independent island nations, but an unrealistic time frame may in the long term be detrimental to meeting new curriculum objectives.

Curriculum feedback

This refers mainly to the interaction between curriculum administrators, consultants and teachers. Feedback methods are supposed to identify problems encountered during the production and implementation of a project. In the Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project, the absence of a feedback network and mechanism was a problem. The lack of any critical feedback severely limited the value of the trial phase of the curriculum development process. Feedback exchanges with consultants are almost always valuable. It is usually very difficult to obtain any kind of critical feedback from the majority of Pacific island teachers, often because many feel on trial. This both reduces their capacity to profit from the experience and adversely affects their feedback to the centre. Furthermore, the expectations for success on the part of the sponsors, administrators and others create unrealistic pressure on teachers.

In the case of TSCP Social Science, the best feedback was through the Social Science Teachers' Association. During regular meetings of the Association, many teachers pointed out the difficulties they faced, and the Association's executive organised special demonstration lessons by their more able teachers. In an area where the majority of curriculum consultants are from outside the region, it is important for ministries of education to encourage and develop this kind of national feedback.

Teacher participation

Although in theory teachers are supposed to be the curriculum developers, in practice most of them play a minimal role in curriculum decision-making. Of course, the amount of teacher influence on major curriculum decisions depends on a country's particular political and social context, and the educational level reached by the majority of its teachers. In many situations major decisions, and much of the work, seem to rest with one or two more active members of the curriculum team, working together with a foreign consultant. There is a need for research in this area. The limited data available from Tonga would suggest that there would probably have been a more positive attitude from teachers in respect of implementation, if they had participated in curriculum writing workshops. Perhaps the important thing is for teachers to feel that they have contributed to the preparation of curriculum materials, rather than major curriculum decisions *per se*. Tonga teacher trainees at the USP, who participated in the preparation of teachers' guides in Social Science, are still active members of the Social Science, History and Geography Teachers' Associations in the country.

Teacher incentives

It is generally true to say that few incentives are offered to teachers to involve themselves in curriculum development, either as writers or implementers, despite ministerial proclamations about the need for their involvement. Moreover, their nature varies from country to country. Curriculum writers in Tonga for the TSCP are now provided with a daily allowance when curriculum workshops are held, but teachers are still in general expected to give up their own time in order to meet curriculum writing requirements. Many curriculum workshops are held during school vacations because some headteachers are unwilling to release teachers during term time. As far as classroom teachers are concerned, many lack the necessary support both professional and material, to be actively involved in curriculum work.

The role of overseas consultants

It is easy to be cynical about the role of overseas consultants and advisers in any area of development in the Pacific. Some spend very little time in Pacific countries and end up writing massive reports with far-reaching recommendations. Others spend far too long on their consultation, becoming in the process insufficiently external. Obviously some sort of balance is required between these extremes. Ideally, of course, the best consultants and advisers are those who possess not only knowledge and understanding of the different cultures and countries but also the sensitivity to realise that people rather than plans are paramount in any development project. It is essential that each island country selects aid packages which guarantee its involvement in selecting consultants - people with a long-term commitment to a place and a willingness to learn as much as they can about 'what is' before recommending 'what ought to be'.

Conclusions

Providing a broad base

There seems to be merit in supporting broad-based curriculum development, as well as providing local support for specific development in particular areas. The TSCP is an example of such a project. Initially, it provided not only for the development and implementation of curriculum materials in different subject areas, but also facilitated the establishment of a curriculum development unit, including secretarial staff support.

Providing local experimentation

Curriculum projects should allow for local experimentation in both the design and implementation stages, even if for practical purposes the materials produced have to be printed abroad. For example, due to the small number of schools selected for trialling of Industrial Arts materials in Tonga, it was decided that Industrial Arts curriculum materials would be printed in Suva. This system worked well

especially when the Curriculum Officer was attached to a USP department and supervised the preparation and printing of these materials. However, in the field of Social Science it was found cheaper to print materials locally, and this was the route that was followed.

Integration of roles

In the process of developing and implementing curriculum, certain goals became apparent which were not consciously identified prior to the beginning of the project. For example, the need for teacher support materials in Social Science prompted the consultant to use the opportunity at USP of incorporating this task into curriculum studies assignments. In this way, the efforts of university specialists, teacher trainees, curriculum officers and practising teachers were integrated - a situation probably not experienced in large metropolitan countries.

Strengthening local capabilities

External support for a project should be initially directed towards facilitating and strengthening local system capabilities. This is often overlooked. The Tonga Secondary Curriculum Project has successfully facilitated local curriculum development work, especially in the areas of Social Science, English, Home Economics, Industrial Arts, and Agriculture and Commercial Practice. A look at Tonga's curriculum plan for 1985 reveals that the Project is facilitating development in almost all areas of the secondary curriculum.

Incentive systems, professional and material, need to be worked out for all aspects of curriculum development work, including the writing and implementing stages. For example, absence of regular interaction between consultants, writers and teachers is costly. Teachers and writers need positive support to maintain the momentum of curriculum development between regular, formal activities such as workshops. Time is as critical a factor as money in curriculum development. Small countries cannot afford to be hasty, because resources are scarce and the margin for error is small.

In developing models of assistance, people development must go together with materials development. Effective implementation will only occur if people-based interaction systems are recognised and encouraged, such as the teachers' subject associations in Tonga. Unfortunately, the political realities in some countries are such that this suggestion may seem naive. Nevertheless, the point remains that quality education can only be brought about by quality teaching and as such teachers hold the key to any new development in education in the countries of the South Pacific.

References

- 1 Western Samoa Secondary Teachers' College Handbook, 1981
- 2 'Ana Maui Taufē'ulungaki 'Curriculum Development in Tonga: Then and Now' *Directions* No. 3 June 1979 (p.28): Institute of Education, University of the South Pacific
- 3 Ali, A, Minister of Education's Address to the 57th Fiji Principals' Association Conference, 1985

6 The Provision of Post-Secondary Education

Kazim Bacchus

Writing with experience of the establishment of the University and the development of other post-secondary educational facilities in Guyana, and also as adviser on higher education and Principal of The College of The Bahamas, Kazim Bacchus observes that the amount and type of education that small nation states need depends on the development strategy which they decide to follow. In particular it depends on the degree to which they accept the idea that providing a certain amount of education for the entire population is, in effect, a right rather than a privilege.

He considers development strategies and post-primary needs in small countries, comparing the Caribbean based approaches of Demas and Best to this issue. This is related to the problem of identifying and providing the appropriate content, at the right standard, in the tertiary education sector. The need for flexibility in constrained economic circumstances sets a direct challenge to those charged with the provision of educational delivery systems at the tertiary level, especially in the context of reducing dependency on external influences. If this challenge can be met, then through its post-secondary sector a small nation state can achieve a more independent position in meeting its skill needs.

Approaches to post-secondary education

If education is viewed as a right then providing universal primary education is a first step. If this has not already been achieved, it must precede the development of general post-secondary provision. Primary education should use instructional strategies that will contain the cost of education, without necessarily reducing overall standards. Effective supervisory services, especially in remote areas, are essential.

The education which is offered should prepare students to be flexible in their choice of further education and training opportunities. Personnel in small countries are usually called upon to perform multi-functional roles. This usually makes it inappropriate to copy training programmes offered to individuals in larger states, where role-specialisation has become a major characteristic of labour markets. Therefore, school programmes offered in small states should not encourage early specialisation but offer pupils a good general education, as a basic foundation, in order that they may achieve the flexibility and adaptability which they will need within jobs and in changes of employment. In addition, the instructional strategies should be of the type that develop a spirit of enquiry, experimentation and enterprise. While this is obviously a necessity in all societies it is of particular importance in small states. Entrepreneurial activities are likely to be on a small scale, with a higher relative dependence on individual ingenuity and innovation than may be the case in larger countries.

The Demas approach

Demas, an economic planner from the Caribbean, was probably one of the first to examine the constraints which size imposes on the type of development strategy which a country can successfully pursue. He has argued that the nature of the economic development process or socio-economic transformation in small scale societies would, of necessity, be different from that of large scale economies. He pointed out that the presence of certain major non-manipulable variables such as limited population size, small internal markets, lack of capital

resources for investment and, often, the absence of any substantial natural resource, together adversely affect the ability of small states to foster internally propelled development and create a self-sustaining economy that would offer some kind of balanced economic growth.

Therefore the social and economic transformation via more balanced economic growth which, according to Demas, is more feasible for countries with a large population base is usually difficult to achieve in small nation states. Because their total output is not likely to be very large they would need to specialise in the production of one or a very limited number of commodities for export to a few markets. So, in the West Indies, he saw the future of small islands as being bound up with the export of the traditional primary products, increasing their productivity in the domestic food sector and in the development of tourism, rather than in manufacturing.

This development strategy would require small scale economies to direct their efforts to compete in terms of the quality and the prices of their products with other countries which are engaged in the same type of production. The ability of small states to outprice their larger competitors on the international market is severely constrained, unless they happen to be in a monopoly situation as in the case of Nauru with its supply of guano.

Therefore the personnel working in these specialised areas of production, whether they are providing holiday facilities for tourists from the West or assembling computers or televisions from imported parts, need skills which are not very different from those required in the economically more developed countries. However, they would usually be at a lower level because the 'screwdriver' type industries which are common to many small states require little technological sophistication on the part of the employees engaged in assembly work. Even in the service industries, such as tourism, the products and services provided tend to be patterned on developed countries, with which the potential consumers are already familiar.

As far as post-secondary education is concerned this type of economy involves providing a limited number of individuals with a narrow range of skills in the few selected fields which the country has

chosen to develop. If these skills are to be provided locally the per capita costs are likely to be high in relative terms. So while the larger of these small scale economies may be able to make provision locally for some higher level education and training, for others it is economically worthwhile either to make arrangements for training to be undertaken on a regional basis or to send their students beyond the region for training, especially if external aid is available to help them. For example, an island like Montserrat in the Caribbean does not even have its own specialised institution for the training of teachers because, with a total teaching force of 150, it finds it cheaper to send its students to study in nearby territories such as Antigua, St Lucia and Guyana.

One of the outcomes of such a development strategy is that the export sectors of the economy have rarely been able to absorb more than a small portion of the potential labour force. In addition, the marked gap in income which develops between those who are working in the export sector and those who are producing for local consumption, results in individuals demanding post-primary and tertiary education in order to escape the lower standards of living in the traditional sector. This group is usually much larger than the export or modern sector can absorb. Therefore, when an effort is made to meet this popular demand for higher levels of education, a substantial proportion of the educated manpower which results is likely to remain unemployed and to seek opportunities to migrate to urban centres or to the economically more developed countries where the job prospects for their skills often seem greater.

The Best approach

An alternative development strategy implicitly suggested by Best in his criticism of Demas's thesis is one which sees the constraints which small scale economies face more as challenges which national development efforts must take into consideration. Best, again drawing on Caribbean experience, draws attention to the need for countries to take stock of and reassess the potential of their resources for development, the factors which have contributed to their present

underutilisation, and how they might be exploited more fully in the future. He sees economic development as more a problem of management, and the inability of individuals to perceive, create and exploit a multiplicity of little openings and opportunities which are available in small scale economies. Small states, he argued, would be in a better position to pursue a more independent development strategy if they followed a more creative approach. This would help reduce their economic and cultural vulnerability. For example, rather than depending on the type of tourism which calls for heavy inputs of foreign capital to construct international hotels and provide imported foodstuffs, the possibility of building up an alternative or supplementary type of tourism with local operators owning small hotels, utilising locally grown foodstuffs, and providing services which do not depend on large inputs of foreign capital, all need to be explored. This is more likely to result in breaking the economic constraints which size is perceived as imposing and thereby helping to stimulate development, especially in view of the fact that there is no known association between size and per capita income or rate of growth. But such a strategy would increase the need for quality post-primary and tertiary education for a larger number of not only well educated but also creative individuals with a variety of skills. This would better prepare them to play a more active part in their own national development thereby reducing the almost total dependency on foreign capital for development.

The kind of higher level manpower which such a development approach requires is, in many ways, different from economically more developed countries. Aid would continue to be welcome, but in support of educational plans and programmes which small states have developed as part of their own overall development strategy. The major aim of development aid for education would be not to determine educational policies but to help work out their detailed implications.

Because this strategy calls for a greater number of individuals with post-secondary education, in the long-term it becomes economically more feasible for many small states to support an educational

institution at this level. In some cases this need can be met through regional co-operation most notably in the development of regional universities. This widens the recruitment base for students and in theory should make it more possible for training and research activities to be undertaken in direct response to the needs of the countries of a region. Whether national or regional this requires the post-secondary institution to offer a range of courses and programmes to meet a wide spectrum of manpower needs. It requires too, a new outlook on the part of the people of small states, one which helps them to be both outward and inward looking at the same time and encourage them to see more clearly the potential benefits of co-operation. Regional co-operation in the provision of post-secondary education and in the conduct of research and development can help to develop the vision of what regional unity and regional co-operation can contribute to the overall development of small nation states.

Challenges of post-secondary provision

The approach suggested by Best highlights a number of challenges for the post-secondary sector. The provision of one effective and economical post-secondary educational institution to meet a variety of educational and training needs presents many problems. It requires imagination and insight along with a philosophy of education which subscribes to the view that it is possible and necessary to break down the traditional separation which has existed in most educational systems between 'academic' and 'practical'. The erosion of this division is mutually beneficial to both groups of students.

This separation has been reinforced by the fact that many who teach in higher education institutions such as universities are not usually trained in the art of teaching. They find it difficult to impart knowledge successfully to students with a less academic orientation. If a single national post-secondary educational institution is established to meet the varied needs of a wide range of students then great care has to be taken in the selection and training of the staff. While

appropriate academic qualifications are important they are not enough if the dualistic pattern of education and training is to be eroded and if institutions are really to become multi-purpose, which is so necessary in small nation states. Brock, in his report for the Commonwealth Secretariat on *Scale, Isolation and Dependence* made a similar point in attempting to support the view of Michael who argued that academic standards need not be reduced if the teaching staff of higher education institutions attempt to offer and even to integrate both academic and practical training. As Michael points out:

... real academic standards can be obtained through good teaching at any level... the enduring benefits to an individual of academic work include the development of imagination, ingenuity and creativity; knowing when information is needed and how to set about finding it. A university can, without shame, undertake the education (not just the training) of competent and thoughtful craftsmen because their work... can be analytical, imaginative and well informed and thus of good academic standard.¹

Another major issue relates to the delivery of educational services and the need to devise the most appropriate delivery systems for this level of education and training, especially bearing in mind the cost factor. Here a number of valuable approaches can be developed including short-term training courses offered as part of regular skill upgrading or continuing general education programmes, and the use of distance education. Institutions and their staff have to develop new approaches to teaching students with a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. The education provided and the instructional methodology used should both be of the type that will foster creativity, stimulate the imagination, encourage students to challenge orthodoxy and treat as problematic what is usually taken as given. To achieve these objectives it is obvious that the simple passing on of new skills and knowledge, though important, will not be enough. It is the whole approach to education and teaching, that characterises a particular institution, which would help to develop these qualities in

students. And while such innovative approaches are generally necessary in all educational systems they are of particular importance in small scale economies if they are going to survive and develop on their already slender resources and not become perpetually dependent on other societies for aid. It is in these areas too, which deal not with policies but with the actual delivery of instructional programmes that external aid can be of greatest assistance.

It must always be remembered that in small scale economies the provision of particular skills and knowledge should not be the only concern of a local post-secondary education institution. Small states can only survive and develop if they are quickly able to perceive new opportunities and to adapt readily to changing economic situations. Therefore maximum flexibility in developing new educational programmes is essential if institutions are to meet changing needs and resist institutional rigidities that would reduce their capacity to adapt to new situations.

It is crucial too, for small states to develop research and development activities to increase the value of their own national resources and domestic production, and to improve the percentage of consumption that can be met from local products. Ultimately such research and development activities can fuel the type of industrialisation which would utilise a high proportion of local inputs. This helps to provide concrete alternatives to the growing disenchantment which is taking place in the LDCs with the production of raw materials as the engine of their economic growth and lead to further processing of local products before they are exported. With capital resources being difficult to obtain for small scale economies, these countries could, through their own research and development activities, produce more appropriate technologies which would not only help to reduce the demand for capital intensive production but also reduce their level of unemployment.

Summary

The central point is that whatever development strategy a small nation chooses to pursue it has important implications for the

education system. There is general acceptance for the view that small nation states need to follow a development policy to reduce their present economic dependence - one which is likely to make their economies less open and promote internally propelled development.

On the one hand these societies cannot close off their economies to the outside world by shutting off all imports and compelling their inhabitants to become completely self-reliant. As Demas argues, to seal off one's economy is to choose economic stagnation and a much lower standard of living. In other words these countries need to pursue a more balanced development strategy. The challenge here arises from the fact that while small nation states cannot do anything about their size they have to try and improve their development prospects by skilful manipulation of the control variables within which they operate.

This calls for greater flexibility in their approach to development and one of the key elements of such a strategy is the training and husbanding of their own human resources, especially at the post-secondary level, through innovative educational and training policies. Central concerns in this policy include the need to reduce dependence on expatriate manpower, where it still exists, and to develop, among their own population, a high degree of flexibility, by virtue of the skills and the knowledge which the education system can offer and which will stand them in good stead in a variety of economic and employment circumstances. Students should be so educated that their initiative will not be stifled. They would be encouraged to be enterprising and innovative.

These are obviously objectives which should characterise any good educational programme but they are even more important in small scale societies. This is because if these nations are to survive economically in a context in which capital resources are not readily available to them, their populations would have to be encouraged to seek out every opportunity that presents itself for purposeful economic activity and to adapt readily to changing economic conditions, especially those affecting their relationships with the outside world.

Reference

- 1 Brock, C (1984) *Scale, Isolation and Dependence : Educational Development in Island, Developing and Other Specialised Disadvantaged States* (p.47), Commonwealth Secretariat, London

7 Technical Education Needs

Suresh Munbodh

In this contribution, Suresh Munbodh identifies some of the more important factors that act on the need for, and the delivery of, technical education in small states. He views technical education in a broad sense, recognising the end product of technical and vocational training as a person able to enter the world of employment as a productive worker, yet with the flexibility to stop, start and change in accordance with labour market requirements. If an integrated approach to development is required, this must apply to technical education too.

After a brief consideration of a number of external factors, attention is given to a wide range of internal factors, ranging from political and industrial contexts through to curriculum, materials and examinations, to financing, language and mobility. He concludes, that however small a country may be, there is no alternative to a high level of professionalism and planning if technical education is to serve the needs of society and the economy efficiently.

The wider economic context

Most small Commonwealth countries have gained independence during the last two decades. As former British colonies they were

geared to the production of primary products, mono-agricultural economies producing goods such as sugar, fish, bananas and ground-nuts. After independence there was a realisation that such economic profiles would not be appropriate if newly established development objectives were to be met. Economic diversification was essential. Consequently, many countries have moved into the industrial and service sectors.

A study of the development of the world's industrial countries shows that they all moved gradually from an economy based on agriculture to one based on industry and services. The same process is taking place in many developing countries but with a major difference. The industrial countries had a guaranteed market for their products. Many had colonies in which to sell their produce, or had a big enough local market to sustain their industries. Today, the developing countries do not enjoy the same advantages. Resources for development are scarcer, and developing nations have to depend on the sale of their products to the industrial nations to earn foreign exchange in order to pay for their imports and obtain any surplus necessary for investment. The irony in all this is that the prices of both the exports and the imports of developing countries are fixed by the industrial nations. This situation only exacerbates the problem of development in the developing world. The smaller countries in particular are more exposed to fluctuations in world trade than are their larger colleagues, but small states have also to operate within smaller margins of error in order to retain some degree of economic stability.

Clearly small states cannot aim at producing everything they need as their limited local markets render production costly. They are dependent on external markets. With many industrial countries adopting protectionist measures, entry of manufactured as well as agricultural goods produced by the developing countries is becoming more difficult. Consequently, the struggle of the smaller nations to develop is becoming harder.

World trade plays an important role in the development of most countries, but it is disproportionately influential in its effect on small

developing states. In some small countries multinationals and the development of Export Processing Zones are important in directing the ways in which economic development is taking place. Competition amongst developing countries to attract multinationals leads to countries providing more and more concessions including duty free facilities, tax holidays, expatriation of investment and profits and cheap and trained labour. Such competition is greatly to the advantage of the investors who become more 'mobile'. The small states are exposed to this mobility. The closure of a factory or an industry may completely upset economic development and the employment situation. In these situations small states are relatively helpless. Thus the need for a flexible workforce able in some part to respond to such uncertainty. The identification of these needs is only the beginning of the long path leading to the development of technical education.

Small states are also part of a 'smaller world' brought about by rapid improvements in communication. Small nations cannot be spared from the influences of modern technology. Radio and television have reached the remotest corners of the earth. People are exposed to what is happening in industrial countries. This exposure creates desires and aspirations which cannot be met. At worst the new forms of communication may be used to destabilise small states politically.

Isolation as well as closeness to continental mainlands may also have adverse effects on the development of small countries. Countries like the Bahamas, close to the USA, or Malta, close to Italy, may suffer from the influence of the metropolitan culture. On the other hand small states in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific have difficulties in accessing their goods and services to the rest of the world. Such situations restrict the development of these countries as good communication is essential for economic growth.

The national context

To the uncertainties associated with the international economic scene are a range of internal factors many of which are inextricably linked with the openness of small state economies.

Unemployment and bureaucracy

A common factor is the problem of unemployment. Formerly it was uneducated unemployment; today increasingly it is 'educated' unemployment. The degree of unemployment varies from country to country and with different political systems. Many countries, in the hope of amortising the effect of unemployment, have absorbed a large number of people in the public sector with many underemployed. In some cases such policies have an adverse effect on the productivity of the system and only add to the complexity of the national bureaucracy, slowing down development, especially innovation.

Industrial policy

Very few small states have been able to put up a coherent policy for industrial development. Those that have managed to achieve something in this respect are on the upper end of the scale of smallness, e.g. Mauritius. As a consequence many small states have enunciated policies to promote the development of technical education without, in many cases, defining their industrial policy. Incentives and guidelines for the development of industries have often been lacking. In many instances policy for the development of technical education is not related to linkages between training and industry. Thus technical education has been unable to develop at the school level alone lacking the support of the world of work.

Type of industries established

Foreign investors and multinationals, attracted to small states, are establishing 'footloose' and 'screwdriver' industries which have a high labour component in their products. Investors are interested in sectors requiring a very low skill component in the production of the goods, therefore the component of the labour force requiring technical education is rarely beyond 10-15 per cent. Such a scenario is a major constraint in the cost-effective provision of technical

education. In many instances the small number of technicians required renders the local running of courses in technical education extremely costly.

Planning the education system

Educational planning is becoming more complex. It is very difficult for small states to employ specialists in different sectors to plan the education system. Such states have to make do with whatever resources they have, or have recourse to expatriates. In small states, committed generalists perform all the functions, with planning divisions/sections usually made up of two or three people.

On the whole small states have an easier task in providing basic education for their people. Enrolment ratios are relatively high (Table 1). However, the planning of education at the secondary level is rendered more difficult because of smallness of scale. Consequently the planning of technical education has suffered. The planners have very often not been able to provide for the small numbers of technical manpower required at any particular time in a variable and unstable employment environment.

Students after some secondary education have looked for opportunities for studies either in the wider region or in distant countries. Many, after their studies, do not go back as they find more remunerative jobs in more developed countries. This causes an inevitable brain drain from the small developing states to countries offering better opportunities. Such a situation is not favourable for the economic growth of the small states; the industrial sector suffers, and with it technical education.

Some small states still have to rely on expatriates to teach at the secondary level. They have also inherited a pattern of education which has not encouraged the learning of technical subjects and an ambience that has even slowed down the development of technical education. Manual work has been looked down upon and technical education has, most of the time, been associated with manual work.

Table 1: Primary Enrolment Ratios (1979-82)

Country	Enrolment ratios	Country	Enrolment ratios
Antigua & Barbuda	80 (B)	Malta	110
Bahamas	99	Mauritius	112 (C)
Barbados	115	Nauru	NA
Belize	85 (A)	St Kitts-Nevis	NA
Botswana	102	St Lucia	95
Brunei	NA	St Vincent & the Grenadines	90
Cyprus	84	Seychelles	95
Dominica	123	Solomon Islands	60
Fiji	109	Swaziland	110
Gambia	69	Tonga	77
Grenada	108	Trinidad & Tobago	91
Guyana	95	Tuvalu	NA
Kiribati	100	Vanuatu	NA
Lesotho	104	Western Samoa	91
Maldives	61		

Source: *Commonwealth Factbook 1985*

Notes: A - 1970 C - 1983
B - 1977

Technical education and training

Industries, in order to establish themselves in small states, have been those requiring basic education in the training of the craftsmen needed. Such training was traditionally provided by the employers on the job. Today any attempt to provide modern technical education

goes against the grain of beliefs of people who tend to confuse it with vocational training. Many small countries have for long included in their plans the diversification of the education system and the elevation of technical education within it. However, the promotion of technical education in schools has often failed because of the established beliefs enunciated above. Employers, and society at large, need to understand the difference between technical education and vocational training. While this confusion exists, it will slow down the evolution of broad-based technical education.

The administration of technical education

The delivery of technical education - like other forms of education - is affected, advantageously and disadvantageously by 'smallness'. The disadvantages may be summarised as:

- 1 Pressure on the system to provide courses in all the skills needed by the economy;
- 2 Exposure of the system to criticism in case of failure; any failure may cast long shadows on present and future action;
- 3 Shortage of professionals in the system for its management. The size does not permit the recruitment of specialists for the different sectors e.g. for budgeting, curriculum development, evaluation and supervision.

However there are several advantages:

- 1 It is small and manageable;
- 2 Its objectives are known, and communication is easier; once inertia is overcome, momentum for change is easily maintained;
- 3 Success stories are more easily and quickly achieved and publicised;
- 4 It can more easily win public support if the public is convinced of its objectives.

Furthermore, small states may have at the most just one or two technical institutions and the fate of technical education very much depends on the leadership and management style of the head of the institution. Small states have to choose the head from locally available cadres and in many instances the wrong choice of head has been responsible for limiting the effective development of technical education.

Provision of materials and equipment

The teaching of technical subjects requires the use of appropriate equipment and materials. Rapidly changing technology soon renders obsolete the equipment in use in schools and colleges. Expensive equipment is bought for the launching of technical subjects. This equipment is soon out of use because of new models already on the market and also because of lack of maintenance. In small states the problem is worsened as the number of items of such equipment required is so small that local representatives are difficult to find and spare parts are virtually unobtainable. The non-availability of spare parts coupled with the lack of proper maintenance technicians reduce the life span of expensive equipment. The non-lubrication of a machine, or its improper use, considerably diminishes its life.

In cases where equipment is available, the lack of materials and tools renders its utilisation difficult. The location of many small countries, and their budgetary and financial procedures, require that imports have to be planned at least two years in advance. Very often orders are not satisfied as major suppliers are not interested in the small quantities ordered.

Such problems call for advance planning and budgeting. Not many of the small states use a rolling budgetary system going over a period of two to three years. Hence, more often than not, institutions providing technical education are short of equipment, materials and tools.

The curriculum

As in most ex-British colonies the curriculum at the primary and secondary levels invariably follows the British model of academic

education in mathematics, language, art, science and social studies. Technical education, whenever it has been introduced, has suffered the consequences of this context. The inherited organisation and management of the curriculum has not been conducive to the development of technical education. Like its 'academic' counterpart, the technical curriculum has been an imported one governed by external examinations.

A major criticism of secondary school curricula in small states is that they have been too academic and operated against practical talents. Employers in the industrialised countries on the other hand want more and more people who have the ability to learn to get on well with others, to communicate, to be reliable, basically numerate and understand how wealth is created.

There are attempts throughout the world today to try to make the curriculum more relevant to the world of work. Employers feel that it is unrealistic to continue to separate general and vocational education, for it is necessary to assimilate the scientific knowledge upon which techniques of production are based.

The curriculum has to be consumer-oriented. Its planners and developer should move out of their four walls into the outside world, to decide on the new directions to be given to the objectives as well as to the content. Unfortunately many of the institutions involved are cut off from the real world and produce curricula which are neither related to the needs of the country nor integrated.

A major challenge facing all countries, including the small states, is how to integrate the development of scientific, mathematical, linguistic, social and technical skills and abilities within the school curriculum. The small states are again at a disadvantage because sufficient expertise to do such a complicated job may not be locally available.

The unavailability of equipment and materials which are essential for proper implementation is a common problem in small states. Consequently teachers prepare their lessons according to the equipment and materials available. This leads to a dichotomy between school and the outside world where industries may be using

the latest technology. In consequence technical institutions find themselves teaching an obsolete curriculum. Furthermore, the curriculum is governed by external examinations which prevent it from adapting itself to local needs, and is based on the acquisition and use of equipment and materials that are alien to the context.

Technical education for girls

As in large states, in small ones girls and women have traditionally kept away from technical subjects thinking that such an education is more suited for boys. In the past the techniques and technology used required physical strength but today the situation has changed and most technical jobs can be performed just as well by a female as a male. However, despite the fact that more and more technical schools are open to both sexes, still fewer girls join. At the Lycee Polytechnique in Mauritius, out of a school population of 350 in 1987 there are only six girls. A greater effort should be made, through the mass media, to attract more girls to technical education. It may even, in the first instance, be necessary to reserve a certain number of places for girls where the allocation is on a competitive basis; that is to say, to operate positive discrimination in their favour.

Teacher training and teacher supply

Small states are mostly young nations. Often they did not have any teacher training institutions at the time of independence. Those which have established such institutions have based them on models which exist in the industrialised countries, therefore training teachers for general rather than technical education. Almost none of the small states of the Commonwealth have a teacher training institution for technical education. In many instances, teachers of technical subjects, who usually have lower academic qualifications, have very little training in their field. Such teachers tend to struggle on their own and teach in an amateurish way, developing only the lower skills and abilities in their students. This again has led to the relegation of technical education to a lower status. Those who are qualified to join the training institutions find better opportunities in the private sector.

Ultimately the quality of teachers of technical education suffers and consequently the quality of pupils choosing technical education suffers as well. This leads to a vicious circle whereby only pupils of lower academic ability are directed to technical streams. It is some of these pupils who later become teachers of technical subjects.

In many small states, as the education system does not provide for technical education, it is difficult if not impossible to obtain qualified people to be trained to be teachers. Some countries have recruited teachers with fewer qualifications than for general education and given them lower pay. Obviously this has had a negative effect on the choice of technical subjects by pupils.

The examination system

Examinations control to a great extent the learning occurring in formal education. Major curricular reforms in industrialised countries did not meet with the expected success as examinations did not change fast enough. In the small states dependence on external examinations (e.g. University of Cambridge Examinations Syndicate and the University of London) has been a major issue of the post-independence years. Many of the countries have their own examinations at the end of the primary cycle but still carry on with external examinations at the 'O' and 'A' levels. The main reason for the reluctance to change is the so-called 'international standard' and recognition of the marketability of certificates. Some localisation/regionalisation of examinations has started with the establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment and the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate.

In the technical field the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI) and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) are the two main bodies responsible for examinations. Very often the curriculum taught to meet the objectives of these examinations is not relevant to the needs of the countries. Here also the examinations need localisation/regionalisation. However the small number of candidates involved may not warrant the cost of skilled

teachers, assessors and local teaching materials and therefore some dependence will inevitably continue. In any case countries may not wish to lose an external qualification and the opportunities this affords overseas.

The equivalence and recognition of certificates

Internal co-operation is essential for accelerating the social and economic development of small states. The comparability and equivalence of the certificates awarded by the local/regional examination bodies with those existing in the industrial countries will facilitate the trend towards localisation of the curriculum.

The official equivalence of certificates, be it in the academic or technical subjects, is essential for students who have to travel overseas either for further studies or even for employment. The task of establishing equivalence amongst the certificates awarded by the different bodies is both complex and delicate.

An information base has to be built up and circulated to all the states to reveal the features the different institutions have in common and the equivalence of the courses they are providing at the national, regional and international levels. Such information would provide support to those choosing technical education and help to attract more able students.

The workplace

The output from technical streams or institutions is expected to enter the world of work and start production immediately. This is not always the case with those graduating from general education. Technical education is managed and organised along the lines of general education whenever it is under state control and very quickly it gets out of touch with the workplace. The older the institution grows the greater the tendency for it to be cut off from the real world of work.

Since 1970 many attempts have been made in developing countries curricula so as to include technical and vocational subjects. This has involved heavier investment in terms of workshops,

laboratories, equipment and materials in so-called 'diversified schools'. However, it would seem that very often the diversified schools recruited poorer quality students; the cost per student was higher in the diversified schools; and students do not find jobs more easily, nor do they earn more.

It is clear that, as with 'general' schools, technical schools and colleges neither create jobs nor fix salaries and in any case the output from the different types of schools competes for the same jobs. While the studies giving rise to these findings were not carried out in small countries, the problems they highlight are all too familiar in such locations where smallness of scale and fragile economies make correspondence between formal education and employment even more difficult to achieve.

The financing of technical education

Technical education is more expensive than general education. Apart from higher capital investment, its running costs are two to three times higher in terms of both the lower average class size for pedagogical and safety reasons and for the 'experimental' nature of the subjects involved. In addition, books and audio-visual aids for technical education are not produced on a large scale and are therefore disproportionately expensive.

Different formulae have been tried to finance technical education, comprising: productive work included in the school curriculum; the school undertaking private work; sponsorship by private firms; and having students pay for the materials.

However none seems to have been very successful. More experiments are being tried in respect of enhanced links with industry and increasing community participation, that is to say: involving industrialists as well as parents in financing technical education. Such an approach is proving relatively more successful as it tends to lower the burden of heavy investment and make the system more locally responsive. In spite of the heavier investment required by technical education, Chion A. Leong in a study carried out in Trinidad and Tobago observes that the output from vocational schools, '... did not

consider what they learnt at school to be closely related or related at all to what they had to do on the job'.

It would seem that special financing for technical education is not a productive approach. If this means that the funding of this aspect of provision would be better done as part of an integrated system then small states addressing their problems of scale might well lead the way in developing a new model.

Links with industry

Technical education unlike academic or general education requires a constant dynamic link with industry, if it is to survive. Very often the absence of such links makes technical certificates merely an additional paper qualification.

Cases of the failure of technical education in small states to link meaningfully with industry abound. However, a few success stories do also exist such as the case of the Lycee Polytechnique in Mauritius. In that case the employers were involved in the project right from its feasibility study. They participated in designing the courses to be offered; in the drafting of the curriculum; in the setting and carrying out of the examinations; in producing short training courses for students and staff; and most importantly in giving an image of the institution to the public. Industrialists still form part of the standing committee which reviews the curriculum each year. Such on-going links enable the institution to grow in harmony with the community it serves and this in turn promotes the image of technical education.

The language issue

The diversity of languages spoken in many small states is another important issue. The post-independence years have seen a revival of the vernacular and other languages and the culture of those who were colonised. English in many cases has become a second language. Some countries like Western Samoa are extending the use of the vernacular right through the primary school. Different formulae have been tried in the different states as to the level at which the vernacular and English should be introduced and none of the small countries has succeeded in resolving the language issue. Mauritius, for example, has

a three language policy - English, French and an Oriental Language - right from the first year of primary school.

Whatever the language policy, it affects technical education to a considerable extent. Most of the books and audio-visual aids are either in English or in French. A knowledge of one of these two languages is essential for the development of technical education and to keep up with progress in the technical and technological fields.

Audio-visual aids

Technology is developing too fast for small states which can neither avoid the influence of such development, nor keep up with it. They simply cannot avail themselves of all the modern technology to aid learning, especially in technical education, because of the high cost and logistics involved.

The islands in the archipelago states and the remote villages in the larger states all face an extra problem of isolation and experience particular problems in the supply of audio-visual aids. Consequently the technical education teachers have to take care of this additional dimension and should be equipped to prepare the most suitable aids to accelerate learning. Just a duplicating machine and a photocopying machine, properly used and maintained, can be of great help to the technical education teacher and student. Such facilities enable teachers to provide students with relevant learning materials as books are very often not available. Whilst distance education can contribute a great deal to technical education in states where electricity supply, radio and television are easily available, it may be more appropriate for the schools to be provided with slide projectors, radio-cassettes, video sets and tapes to help the students in their learning of technical subjects.

Mobility and co-operation

Technical education more than general education calls for regional and international co-operation. Such co-operation should help the exchange of staff and students to maximise utilisation of expensive facilities and thereby to lower costs. No small country can provide for all its technical needs because of the high cost involved. Hence

cooperation amongst technical institutions along the basis of the University of the South Pacific (USP) or the University of West Indies (UWI) should provide additional leverage in promoting technical education. Regional co-operation, using an efficient information system, with data readily available to individual states is essential for meeting the manpower requirements of the small states and especially the planning involved in that. The small states will have to live with the unemployment problem for years to come and will not be able to contain the mobility of students and others who are always seeking better opportunities overseas.

Conclusion

The small member states of the Commonwealth are more often than not faced with more problems than the larger developing countries. Their size does not usually allow them to have local expertise for the planning and programming of their technical education needs which have to be carried out by expatriates not very familiar with local social economic and cultural contexts. Technical education is costly and any project which fails leaves a bad taste for future action. Careful analysis of past experience has shown that a multiplicity of factors have to be considered in the identification of technical education needs. Recommendations based on what is happening elsewhere and intuition have not always proved to be workable.

The small states, because of their size, and in some cases isolation and dependence, have needs particular to themselves. They cannot be treated merely as a reduction of the larger states.

Research has not yet been able to recognise explicitly the link between schooling and jobs and experts such as Oxenham feel that these countries should set about educational reforms with less attention to manpower needs and much more attention to high quality schooling from Grade 1. Training for jobs should be left for the job-givers - the employers. In any case, experience has shown that the introduction of technical education in an amateurish way, in the

general school curriculum, has been costly and unproductive.

Technical education gives good results where it is professionally planned, managed and organised with a real link with the world of work. Investing in technical education in small states needs careful planning and succeeds only in the hands of the committed. The establishment of regional links, to make better use of the available resources, will not only help in reducing costs but will make the provision of technical education more effective and efficient. Small states should bear in mind that the education and work linkage, however differently conceived, is a key to their success.

8 Distance Education

Hilary Perraton and Kenneth Tsekoa

After identifying some of the better known features of small nation states, such as national and local isolation, limitation of resources, human and financial, and the problems they present for the provision of educational services, Hilary Perraton goes on to suggest that distance education can help to alleviate or even overcome such constraints. However, the utilisation of this form of educational delivery can in itself present difficulties for small states although problems can be partially resolved through effective regional and Commonwealth co-operation.

In the second part of this chapter Kenneth Tsekoa identifies the origins of distance education programmes in Lesotho, the approaches that were used and the lessons that might be learnt from that country's experience.

General principles

Distance education has been defined as an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. It usually involves a combination of media. It embraces activities like the work of open universities, correspondence colleges, and education through satellite links. Distance education has been used, too, at many differ-

ent levels of education, ranging from basic education for adults who missed primary school to post-graduate continuing education.

It has been widely argued that one of its strengths is its ability to offer opportunities to students no matter how remote they are, which makes it relevant to questions of how best to use limited resources to meet the needs of the isolated learner. There are a number of examples in the Commonwealth of the effective use of distance education in the delivery of educational services, especially to more isolated areas of a country. These include the Australian schools of the air, which teach children in the outback, and the Canadian Provincial Ministry of Education correspondence colleges which teach adults and children in the remotest corners of the land. There is, too, important experience in the use of distance teaching specifically in small states of the Commonwealth. In the Caribbean and the South Pacific, satellites have been used by the regional universities to overcome barriers of distance. In Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, as in other Commonwealth countries, there are well established government correspondence colleges. In Mauritius, the College of the Air has nearly fifteen years of experience in extending education and in supporting curriculum reform.

Distance education can therefore be important in helping to meet the educational needs of small nation states for two main reasons. Firstly, it has the potential to widen educational opportunities for people who cannot get to a school or a campus. Secondly, where it brings in resources from outside, it can help overcome problems of local or national isolation. It can be important both for individual students outside school - such as adults wanting to improve their educational qualifications, or to get some continuing education - and for classes in school. Correspondence courses, for example, have been widely used in Canada and New Zealand to widen the scope of what can be taught in a remote school with a limited specialist staff.

But despite these possibilities, distance education presents two particular difficulties which need to be faced if it is to play a major role in educational development within small states. The first concerns

feedback and face-to-face support for the learner. Learning at a distance can be a cold, dispiriting, lonely and difficult activity. If there is no tutor nearby to help with difficulties in the text, a correspondence course can seem impossibly difficult. If there are no other students with whom to share difficulties, it is very easy to give up. If there is no mechanism for feedback, then learning can become a one-way process, in which the teacher's or correspondence course's knowledge is all-important and the student's of no account. And, if the isolated student has to wait for weeks or even months for a response to written work, then he or she is less likely ever to complete the course. Therefore, if distance teaching is to be effective, attention must be paid to arrangements for feedback, for face-to-face support, and for tutoring even for the remotest students, with all the logistical difficulties that this entails in, say, meeting the needs of Rodrigues, 350 miles east of Mauritius, or far into the depths of the Kalahari.

The second difficulty is about money. Distance education makes economic sense because resources are put into the careful writing, editing and production of teaching materials instead of into the employment of face-to-face teachers. Such projects become economically viable only if there are enough students for any one course. 'Enough' varies with the sophistication of the teaching method, the level of education, and the amount of face-to-face tutoring allowed for. It is therefore necessary to spread the production costs of materials over an adequate number of students, and this may cause particular difficulties in small countries. There may be too few students in many individual small states to justify the production of good courses.

So there is the paradox: distance education looks like one way of overcoming barriers of isolation and shortages of resources in small states, but cannot itself escape from just these constraints. What can be done? A three-fold strategy holds out some hope.

The first strategy is to think about group learning. If we can share learning difficulties with other students then we may overcome many of our difficulties even in the absence of a tutor. Group learning, offering some kind of face-to-face support, has been of key

importance in many distance-teaching programmes varying from radio schools teaching basic education to adults, to the in-service training of teachers in Tanzania. Thus, if a distance-teaching unit in a small state is to be successful, it needs, paradoxically, to work very hard at issues of face-to-face support, especially for its students in the more remote areas.

The second strategy is to think about turn-round time and about ways of getting swift communication between tutor and student. At least here, changing technology is on our side and satellite links may offer a potential for improvement. But at present they still are often too expensive for educational budgets and access is more limited in the more remote parts of small states. Thus the strategy is clear but the tactics are not.

The third strategy lies in Commonwealth co-operation, if this will allow distance educators in small states to co-operate in producing and using teaching materials. The savings are obvious: five countries may be able to share the costs of producing, say, a basic book-keeping course suitable for all five. And there are precedents here. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) supported the co-operative production of secondary-level courses in Botswana and Lesotho in the late 1970s. Universities in Malaysia, Australia and Canada are already working together to write courses. But difficulties remain. Some are psychological: we often think we can write a better course than one we can borrow, or even share in writing. Co-operation in teaching, as opposed to research, goes against the grain of institutional autonomy. Some are organisational: outside the two regional universities (the University of the South Pacific and the University of the West Indies) there is a lack of an organisational structure for such co-operation, although this is an issue which was addressed by the Expert Group on Distance Education and Open Learning, the report of which was considered by Commonwealth Heads of Government and Commonwealth Ministers of Education during 1987.

The most interesting and important difficulties are educational. They concern the balance between what can be produced centrally,

or internationally, and what needs to be produced locally. Few subjects are entirely universal, and few entirely local. Reconciling what can be produced economically, and for several countries, with the particular needs of adults or children in one country is all important. And that reconciliation may best depend on group study. For if people can jointly work on materials that come from outside their community, and together see where they are relevant and where irrelevant to their own community, then they may be able to get the best of both worlds, tailoring to their own needs material of which they would otherwise be deprived.

To sum up, distance education can help with the problems of isolation and of resources. It will do so successfully only if four conditions are met:

- 1 National or local institutions exist to run distance education;
- 2 These institutions set up local support arrangements, probably based on group study, which allow face-to-face study to back teaching materials brought from outside;
- 3 Teaching materials are developed on a scale big enough to allow adequate resources to be devoted to this development;
- 4 International co-operative structures are created to help small and large states to co-operate in the development and use of distance teaching materials.

The case of Lesotho

Distance education in Lesotho was started in response to three main needs. Firstly, the large number of adults who could not gain access to secondary education or who dropped out before finishing secondary education. Secondly, the large number of literate adults who had no learning materials to improve their daily life activities. Finally, the needs of young people and adults who were illiterate or semi-literate and which called for use of unconventional (non-classroom) approaches. The Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC) was established in 1974 to meet these needs. Moreover, the growing

number of Basotho who enrolled with commercial correspondence colleges in South Africa (for courses following a different syllabus and at high cost) demonstrated a crying need to establish a local and more relevant institution.

Distance education in Lesotho operates in four main areas. These are correspondence courses for formal education; adult, non-formal education for literate Basotho; literacy and numeracy work; and service agency work.

Correspondence courses

Correspondence courses for Junior Certificate and 'O' Level are offered. The courses are based on syllabuses that are in use within the schools. A correspondence course package consists of workbooks (locally designed and produced), tutor marked assignments, a few text books, radio programmes for some subjects, as well as occasional face-to-face sessions. While most of the students study for examination purposes, some study to acquire specific skills such as book-keeping, agriculture and communication. Enrolments for 1985 give an idea of the numbers involved. At the Junior Certificate level a total of 1,437 students were enrolled. At the 'O' Level, a total of 576 students were enrolled. In addition, a teachers upgrading course has used distance education. From 1980-84, approximately 1,500 teachers without qualifications were upgraded and certificated in close collaboration with the National Teacher Training College.

Non-formal education

The non-formal education programmes comprise simply written booklets addressing specific topics of interest to rural Basotho. They are written in the local language - Sesotho. Examples include cookery, animal diseases, vegetable growing, child care, expecting a baby and how to knit. The clientele for these include rural farmers, housewives and others engaged in the struggle to make a living in rural Lesotho. Use of educational radio programmes in support of these booklets, as well as active encouragement for group work are important features of this programme. This aspect of distance

education typifies a peculiarly African concept - that education should involve an individual 'from the cradle to the grave'. Over 80,000 adults benefit from these programmes. The 'curricula' are determined by the clientele themselves through needs assessment surveys carried out by the LDTC.

Literacy and numeracy

The literacy and numeracy programmes use workbooks, games, group study as well as some face-to-face teaching. The clientele includes unschooled herdboys, illiterate farmers, illiterate housewives and others. At the village level groups are helped by a literate group leader or facilitator. At the area or district level the facilitators' activities are co-ordinated by a learning post monitor (an employee of the LDTC) who trains facilitators, monitors progress and provides feedback to the LDTC. The post-literacy materials include leaflets, booklets, pamphlets and a regular newspaper supplement. All these address topics of interest to the learners. Over 20,000 benefit from these programmes.

Service agency work

Use of distance teaching approaches is often preferred by government and non-government organisations. These include health organisations, rural development organisations, adult/non-formal education organisations, agricultural institutions and women's organisations. With its expertise and experience in the design, development and printing of educational materials, the LDTC has been able to offer assistance in the use of this approach. Design and production of posters, leaflets, booklets, photo-strips, workbooks and educational radio programmes by the LDTC have facilitated use of distance teaching methods. Reasonable and affordable fees are charged for these services.

Lessons learnt

A number of lessons have been learnt over the years. Firstly, the role of research and evaluation is crucial to the growth and proper use of

distance teaching methods. The direction, size of programme and choice of media can be determined systematically by deliberate research and evaluation.

Secondly, collaboration and co-operation with other educational institutions within the country and in the sub-region pays dividends. Sharing limited human resources with others, sharing plans and progress reports, jointly producing educational materials and generally developing the collective human resource capacity have all been important and gratifying. Through a sub-regional distance education association, institutions in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland have benefited greatly from such co-operation and collaboration.

Finally, we have learnt that the role of distance education can be most beneficial in adult/non-formal education. While our search for alternatives to schooling has been a major preoccupation, a lot of attention has had to be given to ways of promoting lifelong education. This has proved to be the real strength of endeavours in Lesotho.

9 Educational Provision and Operation

Regional dimensions in the South Pacific

‘Ana Taufe’ulungaki

In this chapter ‘Ana Taufe’ulungaki focuses on the eleven South Pacific states that are both members of the Commonwealth and small. These states share certain common links and characteristics, but it is important to recognise too the many profound differences, and the diversity found within and between countries: differences which are reflected in their education systems and differences which derive from a uniqueness in respect of geography, linguistic heritage, language policies, forms of government, economic status, and varied colonial histories and education legacies. The question then that has to be answered is why, given the distinctiveness and the heterogeneity that characterise the area, the concept of regional solutions to educational problems should have persisted? Consideration is given to the thinking that has promoted and sustained regional educational activities, to examples of regional educational activity and to the effects of regionalism on educational provision and operation in the small member states of the South Pacific.

The case for regional educational activities

The reasoning behind most regional educational projects has been well documented and cogently argued by many of the papers

presented at the Pan-Commonwealth Experts Meeting on Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth held in Mauritius in November 1985, and elsewhere. Some of those arguments are reiterated here.

Cost-effectiveness

The business of providing the educational needs of an individual from kindergarten to tertiary level and of creating and maintaining infrastructures for the provision of this service is a costly exercise. Not even the most affluent societies in the developed world can fulfil to the letter the often cited educational goal to enable the child to achieve his/her fullest mental, physical and emotional potential - even if they do succeed in defining precisely what this entails.

The small land areas and populations of the small states of the South Pacific, their lack of natural resources, trained manpower and capital, their scattered islands, their isolation from the major trade routes and centres of the world, their late entry into the technologically and scientifically advanced western world are only a few of the factors that have affected their capability to provide and operate educational institutions for all the current and expected educational needs of their peoples. Clearly, they cannot afford to provide for all educational needs but they can select and implement the least costly alternative that is most likely to yield the greatest benefit to society. Whether this alternative also benefits the individual is a secondary and often ignored consideration. It is not too difficult, in view of the constraints, to understand the expediency of such an approach to educational development. However, despite these severe limitations, educational achievements in the region are relatively high in comparison with more affluent developing countries: near or universal literacy in Polynesia and Micronesia; universal primary education, except in the Solomons (60 per cent) and Vanuatu (90 per cent); a 1:30 teacher-pupil ratio at primary level and 1:29 at the secondary level; relatively high literacy in English (55 per cent of people over 20 in Tonga). But contrasts in educational development are quite marked between countries in the region: in the Solomons the

number attending secondary schools is only 13 per cent of its primary enrolment as compared to Fiji's 40 per cent, Samoa's 60 per cent and Tonga's 103 per cent. Yet the Solomons is the only country with its own Form 5 examination and its investment in tertiary education is probably the highest in the region. While adult literacy is 100 per cent in most Polynesian groups, it is still very low in the Solomons (13 per cent) and in Vanuatu. Whereas Tonga began secondary education in 1866, the first in the region to do so, the Vanuatu secondary school system was only developed in the 1960s.

Investment in education in all these countries is already very high, accounting, for example, in Kiribati and Vanuatu for over 13 per cent of their total GNP. Figures for current expenditure show that over 80 per cent is on the maintenance of existing systems, with salaries taking over 70 per cent. Very little is spent on resources and training. In most countries universal primary education and much of the secondary education provision has only been made possible with non-government funding. If this source of funding is stopped, governments would be forced either to curtail even further existing educational opportunities or to spend more on education. These countries, with the possible exception of Fiji, basically have subsistence economies, which are heavily dependent on one or two primary products such as copra, sugar or bananas, rendering them extremely vulnerable and dependent on overseas markets over which they have no control.

When current expenditures on education are considered together with the current state of the economies, the inescapable conclusion is that each country is already providing maximum input into education and, in most cases, their economies cannot allow for further educational expansion either laterally or vertically. Added to which most countries are already heavily reliant on multilateral and bilateral assistance in the provision and maintenance of existing systems and educational needs are just one among the multiplicity of priorities in each of these countries, all of which must somehow be met. It has to be acknowledged that regional co-operation in educational provision and operation seems to be the only rational solution in improving educational opportunities.

Virtues of co-operation

The colonial history of the Pacific amply demonstrates the fact that small countries are particularly vulnerable to interference from world powers, whether they like them or not. The countries of the region in world terms are insignificant but they do command vast strategic areas of the Pacific Ocean. Tiny Kiribati with its 822.72 sq km of land area claims 5 million sq km of the Pacific Ocean. Thus even if they choose to opt out of the world stage and pursue their destinies in their own way, it is very unlikely that they will be allowed to do so. But powerless though they may be individually, together as a unit they become at once a potentially significant political and economic entity. This is, for example, the main impetus behind the establishment of the South Pacific Forum but the concept is not limited to political and economic areas but is extended to include most regional activities, including education. While international recognition and credibility might be impossible to obtain for individual education systems and national qualifications, it may be easier to obtain for regional institutions and qualifications.

But beyond these pragmatic considerations, there are other arguments in support of regional co-operation based on more idealistic thinking. In the world of today, increasingly torn apart as it is by extreme sectarian and partisan loyalties, there is every reason to foster and maintain the co-operative traditions intrinsic to the social, cultural, political and economic organisations of the people of the region, where life in a village means the mutual sharing of both the obligations and the privileges of community life. In Polynesia, where political and social structures, based on pyramidal kinship ties, which defined both political and social roles according to blood relationships, were most highly developed, the application of the reciprocal formula of obligations and privileges was total. This formula can be extended from the village unit to the national level and from the national level to the regional level. This spirit of co-operation is best manifested today in what has been labelled 'the Pacific Way', which is essentially a communal and consensual approach to any activity, whether it is at the village, national or regional level. Such an

approach achieved through friendly and peaceful negotiation, is an inherently worthwhile educational goal, and is worth maintaining and developing wherever possible, whether it is in the conduct of the affairs of the South Pacific Forum or in education.

Relevancy

The education systems of all the countries in the region have been borrowed and adapted from the education systems of their colonial masters, and before independence, it was not only the systems that they borrowed but almost everything connected with them: the style of administration used, the curricula they implemented, the qualifications they offered, the training of their personnel, the resources they used, and in most cases the very aims and purposes of their education systems. There was very little, if any, questioning of whether the education systems were benefiting the societies and the individuals they purported to serve. With independence, the question of relevancy, already raised by other newly independent countries elsewhere, suddenly became a major issue. Countries began to look critically at their own educational operations and provisions and found them, not surprisingly, inappropriate and irrelevant to the needs of their people and societies. But recognition and admittance of the shortcomings were far easier to accomplish than the provision of alternatives. To revolutionise an entire education system from its structure, to its administration, to its curricula, to its training, to its goals, requires capital and professional expertise, neither of which was available in any appreciable quantity or number in any of the small countries of the region. To continue to maintain colonial practices was emotionally abhorrent but any major revolutionary change was equally unaffordable.

A regionally developed answer was, however, both acceptable and possible. It would minimise individual government input and maximise the output of scarce trained personnel. Since it would be developed by or in collaboration with regional personnel, it would take into account the constraints as well as the strengths of the region, with the consequence that it was likely to be far more appropriate to

the needs of individual member countries and would certainly be preferable to the alternative of continuing dependence.

Some regional educational activities

Two general points about co-operative regional educational activities must be mentioned. The first is that they are not new, although they may have existed only at the sub-regional level and were mostly of an informal nature. One of the earliest was in the 1830s when the first literacy materials in the Samoan and Fijian languages were printed in Vava'u, Tonga by the Wesleyan press. Later examples are the Fiji School of Medicine which has continued to train doctors for most of the region, and the continuing practice of accommodating secondary and post-secondary students from other countries of the region, such as Kiribati and Vanuatu secondary school students in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, and regional students in the Honiara Technical Institute (Solomons).

The second is that several educational activities are best dealt with at the national level. These include primary schooling, most aspects of secondary schooling, adult and continuing non-formal education, task-specific training for government employment, middle and lower level technical training. However, educational activities which entail heavy capital investment and high recurrent expenses, plus the participation of highly trained staff are obviously areas in which countries can pool their resources to their mutual benefit. This is notably the case at the tertiary level and for middle and high level technical training. Some programmes of this nature are described briefly in the following sections.

The Tate Oral English Programme

The Tate programme was developed for Pacific countries in the 1960s under the sponsorship of the South Pacific Commission and was intended for use at the primary level. At the completion of the programme, the pupil should have acquired sufficient competence in English to switch to an English-medium education. The course was

designed specifically to meet the needs of Pacific students in English and it therefore employed vocabulary items likely to be used in the region. These were introduced within familiar Pacific linguistic contexts. Since the competence of primary school teachers in English was in some doubt, the programme was made 'teacher-proof'. Both the teacher's and the pupils' activities were written in detailed individual lessons. The oral course was accompanied by a supplementary reading programme. Within the framework of the programme, countries were encouraged to adapt them to their own needs: to introduce them at whatever level, to whatever age group, for a short or long time span, although the recommended time was six years, so long as the order of the books and the lessons was maintained.

If the success of the programme was judged solely on adoption, then the Tate programme can be said to have been highly successful since it was widely adopted and slavishly followed by teachers in the region. However, today the Tate course is either abandoned in its entirety or drastically modified, and many countries are now developing their own English programmes or turning to other non-regional English programmes. The question of whether the Tate programme made any significant contribution to English acquisition in the Pacific is largely immaterial. The importance of the Tate programme lies in the fact that it was the first attempt at a regional level to develop curriculum materials that were relevant and appropriate to the region. For that reason alone it was an important contribution to the improvement of the educative process in the region.

The University of the South Pacific

The University of the South Pacific, the only tertiary institution of its type in the region (excluding for the purposes of this discussion the University of Papua New Guinea), was established in the late 1960s and under its founding constitution it is answerable to all eleven governments of its member countries. This is not an enviable position for a university to be in, but it clearly demonstrates the fact that it is

a regional university. Its initial establishment and continuing capital development have been possible only with very generous assistance by New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and to a lesser degree, Canada and the United States. Basically, the university has a teaching role, although it offers a limited number of post-graduate research programmes, depending on the research and supervisory staff available. It offers first degree programmes in the sciences, the arts, and in business studies and administration. A major component of its initial programme was the training of secondary school teachers on four year degree programmes and three year diploma programmes. In the degree programme, academic work and professional training are combined. The student graduates with a degree plus a graduate certificate of teaching. The three-year diploma programme prepares teachers for teaching in the first four years (Forms 1-4) of secondary schooling.

Besides its teaching role, the university conducts research and provides consultancy services. With the creation of the Institutes (e.g. the Institute of Education) within the University's three major Schools, the University has been able to increase its responses to requests for in-country training and consultancy assistance from member governments. The University's extension centres, which are found in most member countries, are visible proof of the University's presence in the region. In addition to offering the usual combination of degree and diploma courses, the centres usually provide extra educational services which are in demand but not available within the host country, such as teaching English to handicraft vendors. The extension courses are a combination of centre-based tutorial services plus satellite sessions with main campus staff. Through the satellite service, centres are linked together across the Pacific and to other centres of learning around the world.

The development of the university over its fifteen years or so of existence is a reflection of the changing needs and priorities of member countries. Initially it had to offer preliminary courses, the equivalents of Forms 5 and 6, in order to cater for students from some countries whose secondary school development had not then achieved

high enough levels to qualify for degree courses. It is still offering foundation courses, the equivalent of Form 7, since most member countries have no Form 7 courses. Recently it has had to discontinue offering the full-time residential education diploma mainly because the main client, Fiji, has ceased sending students.

At the same time, in response to demands from the region, it has developed programmes to meet the specialist needs of growing professional groups, such as the law diploma and a diploma and certificate in the teaching of English as a second language. But despite the evidence of a university responding and adapting to changing educational needs and priorities, hampered as it is by financial constraints and the burden of having to meet the demands of not one but eleven governments, many member countries are increasingly turning away from services already provided by the university to establish their own, with, for example, not only Fiji, but Tonga, Samoa, and the Solomons, already developing or planning to develop their own diploma in education. Samoa has gone one step further and established its own university, although so far it has simply borrowed the University of the South Pacific's course work. Some member countries have also resumed the practice of sending many of their government-funded scholars to metropolitan institutions, although the same courses are available at the University of the South Pacific.

The UNDP/Unesco Secondary School Curriculum Project

This project, funded by UNDP, administered by Unesco and based at the University of the South Pacific, was intended to develop a common basic four year secondary school programme (Forms 1-4) for member countries in the whole curriculum. It was to meet the needs of school leavers for whom a four year course or local leaving certificate would be terminal but which would also form the basis on which courses to Forms 5 and 6 would be built.

Curriculum writers were recruited from practising teachers in the region, who worked under the supervision of, and in collaboration with, the consultants appointed to the project. This was the first and last attempt at regional co-operation in curriculum development.

From the participating governments' point of view, the project was the first meaningful attempt to offer an education at the secondary level that was commensurate with the contexts of the Pacific. For the first time, Pacific teachers and educational administrators were actively involved in the process of curriculum development. However, despite the genuine enthusiasm the project generated in the region, it was terminated before it had achieved many of its goals, although the region as well as individual governments had requested its continuation. What the region was left with were some personnel who had been exposed to the process of curriculum development and some partially completed curriculum materials. Only Science, Maths and Social Science had completed Forms 1-4 materials, but the Social Science Forms 3 and 4 materials had been rejected by the region for overt and inappropriate political content.

The main achievements of the project were: it began the process of providing a more meaningful and realistic secondary education in the region; it began the process of teacher participation in curriculum development; it encouraged the creation of curriculum and planning units within ministries of education in member countries. However, its greatest achievement was that it made countries conscious for the first time of the potential abilities of their own personnel to plan, develop, implement and evaluate their own educational programmes according to their own particular goals and priorities, and this only came about because the project was terminated and member countries were forced to rely more on their own resources.

The South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment

The Board is based at the University of the South Pacific and is funded mainly by New Zealand and Australia, with smaller contributions from member countries. Its main functions are to give assistance to countries of the region in improving their own national examinations and to develop examinations to replace the New Zealand School Certificate and University Entrance examinations. Most countries of the region, apart from the Solomons, Vanuatu and Nauru, present

candidates for the New Zealand Forms 5 and 6 examinations. The establishment of the Board is an attempt to develop examinations that would be the logical culmination of the new curricula that have been developed by member countries to meet their particular national needs.

So far the Board provides training in-country, at the sub-regional and regional levels, and consultancy services. It is early days yet to assess the impact of the Board or to predict its future development, but it is unlikely, in view of educational developments in the region, that regional examinations would be developed to replace the New Zealand examinations. What is more likely to happen is the continuing development of national examinations which would be moderated and co-ordinated through the Board.

Effects of regionalism on provision and operation

Countries of the region, in consenting to participate in joint regional education projects, seek to achieve a number of educational development goals:

- 1 To obtain educational services which, individually, they can neither afford nor possess the expertise to operate;
- 2 To provide their own personnel with relevant and wider experience and training, and to hasten the process of high level professional training;
- 3 To obtain educational programmes, services, and practices that reflect their values and aspirations and which are appropriate to Pacific contexts;
- 4 To lessen educational dependency and increase self-reliance in both educational practices and provision.

All four of the educational projects described previously contributed in some measure to the fulfilment of each of the goals. Each provided a new and much needed vocational service; each provided a combination of training packages at the regional, sub-regional and national levels; each was an attempt to match educational provision

to specific regional needs; each represented a step away from dependency and a step forward towards educational self-reliance. The two curriculum projects, even though their official existence was of relatively short duration, left impacts still measurable today. The Assessment Board is providing valuable professional training and advice in a much needed area.

Obviously, out of the four, the greatest contributions have been made by the university. In its fifteen or so years of existence, the number of graduates in member countries have multiplied enormously to the extent that Fiji is now in the equivocal position of possessing too many graduates. In every country, the university's graduates are not only occupying positions of responsibility, many of them heads of government departments determining policies, but are contributing much needed professional skills in many areas vital to national development. They bring to their tasks training which has been specifically oriented towards those conditions. At the same time, through the university's in-service training programmes many more professionals are upgraded and kept up-to-date in their skills and knowledge and given fresh motivation. By participating in these regional and sub-regional training programmes professionals from member countries have the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives and thus bring to their own situations and tasks new perceptions and skills. Through the extension services, middle and lower level personnel are provided with the opportunities to improve their professional qualifications. In 1984, some 35 per cent of the entire teaching force of Tonga (1,599 teachers at both primary and secondary schools) were reportedly enrolled for degree or diploma programmes with their extension centre, a figure which brought consternation to the government, since part of its contribution to the university was based on student participation.

When the four educational projects are reviewed in terms of their ability to meet expectations of member countries, it would be fair to conclude that they were and are largely successful. However, it is also clear from the review that member countries are slowly but inexorably moving towards separate and individual educational

development, a trend which has been acknowledged already by other reports. If regional educational projects have been demonstrated to fulfil expectations, and if the reasons for regional co-operation have not ceased to exist, why have member countries turned away from joint regional education projects?

The answers are complex and are at best speculative but they seem to stem largely from the very motives that initially prompted regional participation.

The relevancy issue rides again

One of the most persuasive arguments for joint regional education projects was the issue of providing relevant and realistic education. Hitherto, member countries had either borrowed or merely accepted whatever educational provision their colonial masters chose to give them. With independence came the first opportunity to determine educational policies and practices. There was of course no question of getting rid of western education, even had they wanted to, or of devising plausible alternatives, but they could begin the process of providing a more meaningful education in small ways at little cost to themselves and hence the Tate Education Programme and the UNDP/Unesco Project. But as history has shown, the projects were only partly successful. In some ways, the failure of the projects was partially attributable to their own flaws, either in their conceptual frameworks or in their implementation strategies. For example, neither took fully into account the sheer physical distances between countries or within countries, or the enormous variability in educational goals, structures, organisations and the resources available to education within each country. The sharing of common educational terms and practices only compounded the issue by presenting an illusory facade of sameness. For example, the term *Form 1* may be used throughout but it might refer to different levels and different age groups, and the standards would certainly vary from one country to another. But perhaps the most important factor was that most countries were not satisfied that the aims, content and methods of the two curriculum projects met their specific and individual needs.

The projects, in sincerely attempting to conform to a regional context had to concentrate on the so-called regional features and develop their materials accordingly. But there are eleven countries in the region, each one unique and distinct from the other. Not one represents a 'regional' country, and the projects, in endeavouring to cater to the needs of a mythical and abstract entity, ended up with educational programmes that did not match the concrete requirements of any member country. Countries, of course, acknowledged that the projects provided training and curricula that were certainly closer to their needs than previous programmes of non-regional origin, but the fact still remained that the two projects did not match individual needs .

The projects made the assumptions that by providing a common core, member countries could then provide supplementary materials that would reflect their own individual needs. However, a common core by its very nature assumes common goals, common priorities, common structures and methods of operation, which is far from the reality of the region. Education systems are political tools and subject to the control of governments which allocate their goals and resources. Therefore, however much the fact might be deplored, their policies, contents and methodologies are to a very large extent a reflection of the policies and practices of their governments.

Individual education systems in response to governmental directives have to find their own common core, fashioned from the diverse needs and aspirations of their own people and society, and only when this is achieved can they turn from this independent but necessary task to consider the wider experiences that are afforded through associations with other systems. As pre-independent educational systems were very much the creatures of their colonial masters so are post-independent education systems the embodiments of their present governments' needs and hopes. No regional curriculum project can meet with integrity, individually and collectively, those needs and hopes.

Relevancy is the reason most likely to prevent the development of regional examinations to replace the New Zealand examinations.

Most countries have now established their own curriculum development units which are developing their own curriculum materials. The next logical step is the establishment of national examinations based on those curricula, which some countries have already done or are in the process of doing; they are in essence evaluations of the educational provision and operation within each country.

Educational independence

The creation of joint regional education projects was in some measure a declaration of the need to assert regional independence and represented in an overt way the further distancing of the region from their colonial masters. With independence, the educational focus shifted away from the metropolitan centres to the region itself. Thus participation in regional activities was not only expected to bring tangible benefits but it was important too as another symbolic indication of independence. It represented a necessary transitional phase in the quest for individual self-reliance and the creation of unique national identities. No country had the resources, both human and material, to indulge in quixotic gestures immediately after independence. However, the fact that countries of the region are not separately pursuing their own educational destinies is a measure of the success of regional co-operation. Through their participation in regional projects, regional personnel have been training in greater numbers than hitherto, with the consequence that localisation of professional and top level positions in government and in the private sector is nearing a hundred per cent in many countries. For the first time, their own nationals are in positions to formulate and implement their own policies. It is not entirely coincidental that the moves towards separate educational development only occurred after increased localisation of staff. If greater self-reliance was one of the goals of regional co-operation, the step now taken by member countries can only be interpreted as a successful achievement of that aim.

While countries admit their debt to regional projects, they argue, however, that regional solutions are just as much of an imposition and encroachment on their individual freedom as the

previous colonial educational practices were. They admit that all regional projects were initiated by non-regional personnel and organisations, with good intentions no doubt and undoubted benefits, but they were and are, impositions. They further add that regional activities do not always guarantee a better understanding of the problems of individual member countries and neither does the sharing of regional personnel. Nor does it lessen the time needed for orientation. An expert from one regional country on assignment to another, despite his/her Pacific background, is just as much in need of full briefing as a non-regional person, perhaps even more so as he is probably suffering from many more erroneous preconceptions.

The increase in the number of trained and skilled professionals has enabled member countries to mount in-country training in areas of need, in which previously they had had to rely on regional or sub-regional provision, such as secondary teacher training and middle level technical training. But this has not been the only factor. Member countries have felt that their needs were either not being met, or were taking too long. For example, when member countries were forced by the collapse of the UNDP/Unesco Project to develop their own curricula, they found that there were mis-matches between the rationale, contents, and methodology of their curricula. In addition, the training received by their teachers from regional projects tended to favour the host countries, so that some training was accelerated in some member countries but barely made progress in others.

With countries increasingly undertaking their own training at the middle and lower levels, they are beginning to consider the specialist and post-graduate training needs of their top professions, and with this group, member countries perceive another weakness in regional educational provision. They believe they are too narrowly focused on regional issues, with the result that their top professionals are exposed only to a regional context and other regional personnel, whereas what they need are exposures to and experiences in world contexts and affairs. They argue that their countries depend on world markets, and therefore their leaders need as much experience in

world affairs as they do in regional matters, probably more so, in view of their importance to their economies. Thus the quest for self-reliance has progressed from regional co-operation to individual development to metropolitan experience.

What then of regionalism?

If the trend towards separate educational development persists, what is the future of the region? Again, the answers are not clear, but perhaps the situation will be better understood in a discussion of the two issues that have been left unresolved by the discussion so far: one is whether the countries can afford such developments and two is whether the 'Pacific Way' is worth preserving.

Is separate educational development viable?

The answer is both 'no' and 'yes'. It is an unequivocal 'no' in economic terms, if member countries are thinking of providing every educational need from kindergarten to tertiary level. The desire to mould their education system in their own unique national images or to use it in achieving this is understandable but it does not change the reality of the economic situation or the fact that regional education projects as well as many of the national educational programmes were and still are heavily subsidised by multilateral and bilateral agencies. Countries must address themselves to resolving the issue of relevancy versus the need for regional and world experiences. Countries argue that in-country educational provision should serve the needs of the majority who are expected to live and work within those societies and therefore education systems should not be geared, as they were in the past, to the needs of the tiny minority needing regional or world exposure, an argument which applies to both national and regional provision. This argument, as applied to the national level, is somewhat spurious in the light of the fact that a very high percentage of regional people (allegedly 40 per cent of Tonga's population) migrate to metropolitan centres. What percentage of the curricula should be context-based and at what level is a question that

each country must resolve in terms of its own priorities and goals. It is a question that each country must decide for itself.

The answer is also 'no' if by educational provision member countries think in terms of high profile, prestigious infrastructures which require expensive capital investments and high maintenance costs, or of complex, specialised training needing special facilities and highly trained professional staff that are both costly to mount and to sustain. The former should have no place either at the national or regional level. The latter type of training, if vitally necessary to national and regional development, can either be sought through regional co-operation or it may be found existing already in metropolitan countries. Either solution will be less costly than a national attempt. However, regional solutions do not always prove to be the most efficient and economic use of resources. The efficiency and success of regional projects depend on the kind of educational service to be provided, the level at which it is aimed and implemented and the number participating at the national level.

Projects which require a minimal physical base, such as one central location, with minimal staff and minimal target population, and whose contents are largely abstract and theoretical, are likely to be cost-effective and successfully implemented at the regional level. Tertiary education and most high level professional training fall into this category. However, programmes which require duplication of facilities and personnel at the national levels, involve the participation of whole national systems, and require heavy national inputs in terms of time, resources and personnel, such as curriculum development projects for primary and secondary schools, are unlikely to be successful or efficiently administered. Such educational programmes can be provided at lower unit costs and operated more efficiently and successfully at the national level. Thus the answer can be 'yes' if member countries adopt policies of selected vocational provision and the least costly methods of operation, and do not succumb to pressure from either the regional or the world community to conform to the accepted norms by which achievements or otherwise of educational systems and countries are normally judged, such as their ability to

provide free and compulsory education to a certain age group for a number of specified years, or the percentage of degree holders in the total population. They must also resist the temptation to accelerate the pace of development when neither the urgency of the need nor the resources available can justify the haste or the expense. Particularly, they must not expect or solicit continuing assistance in the form of funds, materials or personnel from either the region or the world community for in-country educational provision. Apart from the doubtful moral and ethical nature of such requests, external assistance, however benevolent its aims, is never unconditional and will always exert some influence on policies, contents and implementation strategies. Educational provision developed to meet both nationalistic and instrumental purposes must be entirely supported from within the system if it is to achieve its goals with any meaningful integrity. This is the price countries must be prepared to pay to retain and maintain their own evolving and still fragile and vulnerable national identities.

Within the resources available to countries, they can maximise their effects by improving the efficiency of their operational methods and by optimising the use of all resources both human and material, and by judicious and flexible redeployment of resources to areas of need most likely to yield the greatest returns to individuals and to society. For example, the total trained manpower in the country is a very valuable asset whose effectiveness and efficiency is often dissipated and wastefully squandered by compartmentalisation into rigid and narrow fields of endeavour. When the same force is considered as a single entity and mobilised to perform a multiplicity of tasks, its impact is made in geometric progression. The capital assets of a country could be utilised in a similar fashion. Tonga's newly created Community Development and Training Centre is based on such a concept, consisting of a skeletal staff whose main function is facilitating training, with a minimal physical infrastructure. Its teaching staff are whoever in the community possess the requisite skills and knowledge and its classrooms are wherever the training need is. Countries are of course aware that their own personnel are likely to

be lacking in experience, are burdened with too many diverse responsibilities, and are working under severe material constraints but these are not insurmountable obstacles to providing a meaningful and worthwhile educational service that also meets the present and future needs of their people. Countries have gained confidence and experience in participating in regional activities, and they do have today a pool of trained and capable professionals. These facts should be acknowledged and member countries be allowed to determine their own needs, seek their own answers and decide for themselves the issue of how many of these needs they can afford to provide in-country and for how many they should seek co-operative solutions. They are more likely to accomplish these tasks with sagacity and imagination, if they are neither inundated with forecasts of doom nor harassed with inducements of well-meaning but fatal assistance.

Is the 'Pacific Way' only a myth?

If member countries are so anxious to pursue their own educational answers, it might appear that co-operation and consensus are not after all the 'Pacific Way'. Perhaps this is so if the matter were only considered superficially. Despite the obvious desire of member countries to provide as much as possible of their societies educational needs, there is no evidence to suggest that they are attempting to pursue in-country educational provision to the exclusion of sub-regional, regional or metropolitan co-operation. Member countries of the region today have continued to make use of each other's educational facilities at all levels, both informally and formally, and no member country has shut its doors against training requests from other members, whether secondary school places or practical attachments to some government departments, even though their own needs in those areas might not have been fully met. Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea have given important similar assistance, although they are strictly not of the region. In fact, the establishment of so many new educational institutions within the region itself has provided member countries without such institutions with a much wider choice and a much higher likelihood of

finding an institution that can meet their particular needs. Such evidence suggests that member countries have already adopted policies of selected educational provision and given notice thereby that they accept that certain educational developments, such as tertiary education, at least at this stage of their development, are either not suitable, are too costly, are best provided at the regional level or already exist in some metropolitan or developing country. They would have already ascertained that such provisions would neither compromise their desire for meaningful education within their contexts, nor reduce their chances of successful formulation and implementation. Thus regional educational activities would be seen as developing from individual national need assessments of member countries taken within the constraints of their own national goals, priorities, and available resources. Such regional programmes are much more likely to be successful and enduring since the participation of member countries would have arisen from genuine national priorities. The end results might not be too far removed from some of the regional programmes described previously. The main difference is that the move towards regional co-operation would have come from individual decisions by member countries, coerced and compelled by nothing other than their own national interests. Under these circumstances, it is only to be expected that each member country would have a vested interest in ensuring their success.

It is easy to deplore the pure pragmatism exhibited by such attitudes to regional educational co-operation but it is readily understandable in terms of national survival. If it ever comes to a question of regional versus national survival, there is really no doubt as to what the choice of member countries would be. The demise of the former is likely to bring deep regrets but to insist on its survival against the best interests of individual member states would be tantamount to mass national suicide.

However, successful co-operation at whatever level is based on mutual respect for each other's contribution regardless of size, manner or value. It is only when people are strong in themselves, certain of their identities and confident of who they are and where

they are going, that they can bring to any co-operative task or association, as individuals and as groups, a meaningful and valued contribution. Member countries, although willing, were induced to participate in regional educational projects immediately after or even before independence, when many of them had neither the time nor the skills to create homogeneity out of the disparate elements of their societies. It is only now that some member countries have begun to succeed in those tasks. The fact that they are committed to those tasks and seemingly at the expense of regionalism is an indication that the 'Pacific Way' can be perceived in many ways and the fact that sub-regional and regional co-operation is occurring at different levels, undeterred by nationalistic rhetoric and gestures, are testimonies to its being alive and thriving. Endeavours at creating and fostering national identities, and the struggles towards stable and self-sufficient political and economic systems, of which the educational systems are instruments, are integral processes of national development. The existence of the educational region has meaning only within this context, as a contributing instrument towards the achievements of individual national goals.

10 Regional Co-operation

A view from the University of the South Pacific

Prem Udagama

In this second overview of regional co-operation in the South Pacific, Prem Udagama offers the perspective of one who has served and the regional university, the University of the South Pacific. He observes that regional co-operation in the South Pacific has been selective and pragmatic, not integrated or ideological. As a political approach aimed at grappling with the problems of the area it has generally been externally imposed. Nevertheless the emerging set of cultural beliefs about a 'Pacific Way' is indigenous and may ultimately prove to be a regionally cohesive force.

He examines, in particular, the role and the potential of the University of the South Pacific and especially its Institute of Education.

Efforts at regional co-operation in the South Pacific

Since the Second World War two hundred or more regional organisations have been formed in the South Pacific. These have nearly all been offshoots of the decolonisation process. The first practical expression of regionalism, apart from the more abstract concept of an all embracing colonial policy, was the formulation of

the South Pacific Commission (SPC) in 1947, just after the end of World War Two. The members of the Commission were the colonial and major regional powers in the South Pacific - the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand. The rationale for the creation of this organisation was to reduce the cost to the colonial powers of administering their various territories in the region, share information on policies and practices, and to try to bring about a greater consistency in approach to regional development by the various metropolises, while continuing to 'civilise the natives'.

The role played by Australia and New Zealand in the strengthening of regional co-operation in the South Pacific has become even more significant in recent years. Unlike the other metropolitan powers these two countries are geographically close to the region, and part of its regional base. Further, their relative wealth, their European heritage and more recently, their relationship with their own indigenous populations who have their own cultural links with the rest of the region, have all helped to increase their significance in the South Pacific. They continue to be major aid donors to the region and while their relationship with some of the Pacific territories was originally a colonial one this has changed as many of the states have become politically independent nations.

Regional co-operation continues to be important for the small states of the Pacific as a means of reinforcing regional cohesiveness and solidarity, fostering economic growth, and improving efficiency in the provision and administration of certain services. It is a political as well as an economic necessity, which helps to guarantee continued political sovereignty and integrity. For the islands in the Pacific Ocean regional co-operation helps to act as a buffer against continued economic dependence and exploitation.

But there are problems which adversely affect the strengthening and further development of regional co-operation in the South Pacific. For example, the economically more developed nations tend to deal with individual territories on a bilateral basis rather than in a regional context, with the result that only about two per cent of funds

for development assistance in 1979 were earmarked for regional organisations or initiatives. Another factor which adversely affects the strengthening of regional institutions has been that many projects tend to be contracted out to institutions and individuals in the donor countries rather than being given to the regional institutions which is one way of helping to develop regional expertise, strengthen the infrastructures of regional institutions and develop greater local confidence in the trained personnel available in the region. The regional university - The University of the South Pacific - has protested about these practices but not always with success.

Regional educational activities of the South Pacific Commission

As noted above, the SPC was founded by the colonial powers in 1947. One of its major tasks was the overall social development of the region. The organisation was given responsibility for sixteen programme areas, including education. But this last portfolio was not accorded as high a priority as, for example, agriculture, health and fisheries.

Despite its limited mandate for education the SPC has helped to promote regional discussions on education for nearly four decades. The first conference which it sponsored suggested that English should be made the second or the third language for the peoples of the region. One outcome of this was that while George Pitman and Gloria Tate were working on an English Language Teaching Project in the region they introduced the Tate Oral English syllabus. Readers accompanying the syllabus enjoyed wide popularity throughout the region for many years and it is only recently that their continued usefulness has been challenged. However not all the proposals put forward by the SPC were so successful, in particular, the recommendation to establish a regional education centre, put forward in 1959, failed to gain acceptance.

At the Fifth South Pacific Conference in 1963 it was recommended that if education was to be related effectively to the needs of countries it should be:

- closely integrated with efforts directed at helping to solve problems of local economic and social development
- co-ordinated with plans for social and economic advancement of the region, in order to be mutually supportive of overall development efforts
- learning by doing; the best approach for individuals to discover their capacity for solving life's problems

The range of concerns mentioned in the above recommendations indicate the breadth of the issues which were taken up at these regional conferences.

There were many other experts' seminars, conferences and workshops held in an attempt to forge a regional consensus on education policies and practices for the region. For example, the SPC regional conference in 1978 discussed the theme 'Education for What?' and came out in favour of the development of a more relevant curriculum for the region. In 1978 the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment was proposed and this has now been established in Suva, Fiji. However, with some islands preferring to have their own examinations, interest in the Board has seemed to wax and wane.

Further, as the result of a deliberate policy in 1973, the SPC began to move away from the area of formal education and concern itself more with non-formal education. Such areas as the education of women and youth, and vocational education have been its main concerns, and this is reflected in community education programmes and home economics. Courses in these areas are conducted in centres located in Suva and in mobile vocational and youth education units. The decline of interest in formal education by the SPC was probably due to the establishment of the University of South Pacific (USP) and in particular its Institute of Education which took over the responsibility for activities such as organising regional seminars.

In summary, although the SPC's agenda on education, as seen from its publications, had low priority, it rendered a useful service in

this area throughout the region, and stimulated discussions on educational matters as an aid to policy making. It provided a stimulant to regional co-operation.

Regional education institutions

The organisation and development of regional tertiary educational institutions to serve the micro- and mini-states has been an important area of co-operation. Some of the institutions developed to service regional needs are described below.

The Fiji School of Medicine

About a century ago, long before regionalism became a goal, the present School of Medicine was founded in Suva with American aid and expertise. It was earlier called the Central Medical School and has undergone many changes in name and support over the years. The school has made an important contribution to the health and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific Islands and served United States, British, Australian and New Zealand colonial territories by training their nurses, health workers, other para-medical staff, and regional medical practitioners. This institution has attempted to combine western medical practice with the cultural beliefs and practices of the region and has done yeoman service in preparing individuals to help meet the health needs of Pacific peoples.

However, because the institution is now administered by the Government of Fiji some critics tend to under-emphasise the regional nature of its work. But whatever the criticisms, nationals from the various South Pacific countries continue to receive training there. Also, from its inception, the school has had dedicated leaders, and many of its alumni have become leaders in their own societies.

The University of the South Pacific (USP)

There could be no better example of regional co-operation in education in the South Pacific than the regional university which serves 11 small island nations with a joint population of 1.5 million.

It is one of the few truly regional universities functioning anywhere in the world.

Established by Royal Charter in 1968, USP was based on a Report by a Higher Education Commission (Morris Report) in 1966 and a subsequent report in 1967 by an academic planner concerned explicitly to implement the recommendations of the earlier report. In its eighteen years of existence, the university has followed assiduously the dictates of its charter, as recorded in various reports by the University Grants Committee, the Vice-Chancellor, and in other documents. As an example, the UGC triennium report (1980-83) states:

The university believes that in many ways it has innovatively responded to challenges inherent in its situation of being a single university attempting not only to meet national needs in development and independence but at the same time being a regional organisation.

In order to serve the needs of the region USP has, according to James Maraj, former Vice-Chancellor, combined the activities of a traditional western type university, a community college, a land grants college, an open university, a development institute, a publication and research organisation and an advisory, consultancy, project formulation and implementation agency. Its geographical presence also indicates its regional character. Two main campuses are located in Suva (Fiji) and Alafua (Western Samoa), and there are now nine centres throughout the region. Some of these serve the entire region such as the Rural Development Centre in Tonga and the Law and Language Centre in Vanuatu.

A regional contribution to education is also made by the Extension Services sector of the university which, with centres in all member countries, has extended university education to each member state. Their importance can be seen in the fact that in 1985 there were 7,370 students enrolled in extension studies as compared with 1,972 on-campus students. In addition to regular certificate, diploma and degree students, there are 3,635 students enrolled in continuing

education courses organised by the centres.

The seven Institutes, in education, natural resources, marine resources, Pacific Studies, social and administrative studies, agriculture and rural development, law and linguistic studies, and the six units are regional extension arms of the university. The Institutes provide in-service training courses, consultancy and advisory functions to the region. In 1985 there were 1,411 participants in short-term training courses from the countries of the region. Furthermore, satellite communication provides a link between the national centres and the two campuses.

The USP is also aware of its wider responsibilities in the larger Pacific basin. Through official institutional and personal contacts, and by student exchange, the USP maintains an open door with other universities and institutions in the Pacific. These include the University of Papua New Guinea, the University of Guam, the United Nations University, the eastern universities of Australia and the universities of New Zealand. It is also likely that students from the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Marshall Islands will come to USP in the future.

The contribution of USP to tertiary education and other activities in the region is impressive by any standards despite the fact that it has a history of less than 20 years. Its role in the pre- and in-service education of teachers and the training of administrative and managerial manpower, scientists, scholars and emergent leaders has been appreciated by the governments of the region. USP graduates are held on a par with others trained elsewhere.

From 1978-81 the USP produced 2,140 graduates and 'diplomats' who occupy important positions throughout the region. By 1986 the number would be nearly 4,000. In Niue and Fiji, there is already one graduate or diplomat for every 360 and 374 in the total population respectively. This impressive contribution to tertiary education in the region may create some problems which are related to the limited population size of the various member states. For example, in Fiji there is already some graduate unemployment. 'Size' and 'islandness' also create problems for training the range of

necessary expertise for development in many countries in the region. Engineers, architects, geologists, oceanographers and other experts are required for maintaining the modern public and private sectors, but will have to be trained abroad because the per capita cost of providing such training at USP would be prohibitive.

The USP Institute of Education (IOE)

From its early beginnings in 1976 the Institute of Education has influenced many aspects of education in the countries of the region. A review of the USP Institutes in 1981 referred to IOE as one of the most effective. The IOE has held annual advisory seminars/workshops which have been attended by ministers of education, permanent secretaries and directors of education (or their representatives) from the region. These meetings help formulate the annual plan of activities by the IOE for its constituent member states, and have also provided an excellent opportunity for educational leaders of the region to meet informally and to exchange ideas, news and views.

The IOE like all other Institutes of the USP has many objectives, including the short-term training of personnel, providing consultancy services and advice, formulating and implementing projects and conducting research.

The major priorities which arise from requests made by countries in the region have been in the areas of:

- educational administration
- educational evaluation and assessment
- curriculum development
- teacher education

But other areas have also been included such as primary education, teaching of English, the development and production of reading materials for children (in English and the regional languages). The Institute regularly publishes its journal *Directions*, mostly on educational problems, issues and research in the region. Its staff has also undertaken research funded locally or by foreign institutions and agencies in New Zealand and Australia, as well as the Commonwealth

Secretariat, Unesco and UNDP. The ongoing curriculum project in vocational subjects with UNDP/Unesco/IOE (1984-1987) is an example of this co-operative effort, as was the Commonwealth Secretariat funded, three month regional training course for educational administrators held in 1978.

The Institute aims to be a catalyst in educational change and innovation in the countries of the region. Its short-term training programmes in assessment, curriculum development, administration, primary school teaching, book writing and development for educational officials in the region are well known. Another developmental service is to have regional officials and teachers on attachment for brief periods of study and research at the Institute.

The Institute has, on many occasions, at the request of governments also tried to co-ordinate teacher training programmes. For example, in 1981 a seminar was held for this purpose in Western Samoa. In addition the staff of the Institute act as advisers and consultants on teacher education to many countries of the region. This important regional role often seems to go unrecognised by external governments and aid agencies.

The Institute takes on innovative activities which foster the development of educational systems and institutions in the region. As an example, IOE organised a Diploma Course in Educational Administration in the Solomon Islands in 1982. This programme has continued for four years, with the aim of supporting the ongoing development of managerial skills. Indeed, after the initial effort, USP adopted the programme as an extension course available to all countries within its jurisdiction. A similar development took place with the certificate in pre-school teaching, which is now an extension course, and the training of school librarians and youth leaders.

The educational impact made in the region by IOE during its brief history cannot be assessed with any reliability without research. Nonetheless, one's observation when travelling in the South Pacific does confirm that the Institute plays a significant, constructive and innovative role in education in all participating countries. The Director's report for 1984 enumerates 65 projects for the year, in all

areas of education. From small activities with little finance and much hope, the Institute has maintained a valuable service to the region and has helped to overcome some of the handicaps of size which face most micro- and mini-states.

Other institutions with regional dimensions

The Pacific Theological College (1965) which is open to all major denominations and the Pacific Regional Seminary for Catholics (1972), both located in Suva, have contributed to the training and education of many Christian pastors, priests and theologians to serve the countries of the region. This has, in a sense, brought Christian ecumenism closer in the South Pacific. There is also, however, the need for a 'coconut' theology to emerge in the South Pacific as one theologian remarked at a conference held in London. Perhaps these two colleges may one day develop a theology to suit the cultures of the region.

The Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT), formerly the Derrick Technical Institute and established under colonial rule to serve the then British territories, is the largest technical institute in the region. It is now a national institution of Fiji but continues to train students from the region for craft, technician and sub-professional work in its nine schools, some under scholarships from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC). Third country scholarships are also awarded to students at FIT by the New Zealand Government, while the smaller technical schools in Kiribati and Solomon Islands train a few students from other countries as seamen and in fisheries.

At the tertiary level some new national institutions have been established in Tonga and Western Samoa. Atenisi University organised by a committed academic, Futa Helu, has begun a degree programme, while in 1983 the government of Western Samoa accepted in principle the idea of establishing a National University and may incorporate a church-organised Iunivesite O Samoa in the near future. Solomon Islands, too, may decide in the future to establish its own university.

In the light of these developments some concern has been expressed over the future of the USP. However, the value of tertiary level education is now being questioned on the basis of its potential rates of return, which inevitably casts doubt on the economic feasibility of the establishment of a university level institution by any one island in the region, except possibly Fiji.

Other regional co-operative activities in education

Teacher education

This is an important area in which there has been much regional co-operation. The governments of the South Pacific gradually took over responsibility for teacher education from the missionaries who initiated much of the early work in this area, such as the Seventh Day Adventists who opened the Fulton College in Fiji in 1941. But before new local institutions were established, two metropolitan countries, Australia and New Zealand, were involved in helping to train both primary and secondary teachers in their institutions. Now almost all except the smallest micro-states of Tuvalu and Tokelau have their own teacher training institutions. But in order to improve the quality of their programmes a regional approach to this activity was attempted by the organisation of regional seminars. In fact, at an early stage the desire was expressed to have a permanent regional organisation. The IOE of USP makes an important contribution in this field especially through its accreditation of certificate and diploma programmes which *inter alia* enable holders of these qualifications to proceed to degree level work at USP or elsewhere.

Pre-school education

While pre-schools are mainly operated by private organisations and individuals in the region - the only exception being Nauru where pre-schools are part of the primary education sector there has been some attempt at regional co-operation to improve education at this level. A South Pacific Pre-School Association was formed several years ago, and the IOE has organised training for pre-school teachers

in association with other organisations in Suva. This has now become a formal certificate programme for pre-school education conducted by the extension services of USP. Many countries other than Fiji and Western Samoa appear to be interested in it. In fact this certificate course might help develop and strengthen the pre-school movement in other countries of the South Pacific.

Primary education

Many micro-states in the South Pacific have now provided universal primary schooling, and those countries that have not yet attained this goal - such as Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands - are well on the way to achieving it within the next decade or so.

With the establishment of the SPC in 1947, efforts began to make qualitative improvements in primary provision. Regional conferences focused on this area. Seminars, workshops and other forms of in-service training for teachers were organised and financed by SPC and metropolitan countries. The meetings organised by the South Pacific Association of Teacher Education were examples of this approach and trend. The Tate Oral English Programme was an outcome of such efforts, and the texts that were produced plus the methods advocated, continue to influence the teaching of English in many island schools.

The USP and its IOE began in 1968 to assist in improving the quality of the primary sector throughout the region. At a special regional seminar in Western Samoa, various aspects of training were discussed and the clearing-house function of the Institute of Education endorsed. As a result, such issues as multiple class teaching, the teaching of English, and the primary school curriculum became areas of study and consultation at the regional level.

Specific research projects were undertaken by the staff of IOE, with the aim of taking improvements further, among which were the 'Book Flood', the Tate English project, bilingualism, assessment, English teaching method, the reading recovery project, the book writing project and local language work. All these efforts were regional in their application, use and adoption and were financed by

a variety of agencies. The attachment of teachers and administrators to the Institute to study any one of these projects was also helped by funding from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC).

Other efforts to improve primary education in the region have been made with the help of churches, non-government organisations and institutions in New Zealand, Australia, the Commonwealth and United Nations agencies.

One of the realities of the region is that primary schools are not only rural and isolated but also have a limited number of teaching personnel. In Fiji there were 230 primary schools in 1984 with an enrolment of 100 students or less. Such schools tend to be scattered in small island communities and are isolated, generally having the less qualified teachers. However, no regional approach so far has been made to find ways and means to improve the quality of education in these schools. Even regional institutions dare not challenge the elitism which exists in this sector of education.

Secondary education

If primary education was organised for the salvation of souls, secondary education, in colonial countries, was organised for the creation of a reliable governing elite during colonial rule and after independence. This is not only obvious in architectural design and school organisation but also in the curriculum. Most secondary schools prepared students for the Overseas Cambridge School Certificate and other examinations. Later New Zealand and some Australian state examinations were selected. Even before a regional concept was cultivated in the South Pacific, the elitist secondary school (so well known in African and Asian British colonies) served as an unseen web in the regional provision of secondary education.

Secondary school curricula in the South Pacific eventually came under some regional scrutiny. The SPC in the early 1960s was a catalyst in promoting the issue of relevance in the secondary curriculum. Later the UNDP/Unesco/USP Regional Secondary Development Project (1970-75) brought a fresh approach to the

curriculum of junior secondary schools in the region. However this project faced serious problems. A number of its elements were never completed and some countries rejected the materials produced. Nonetheless the project could be deemed successful in that it contributed substantially towards an improved educative process, and in the sense that it offered a more meaningful education than had been the case previously. The project also assisted quite significantly in the identification and training of key people in curriculum development in many subject areas. It gave skills in curriculum development and the confidence essential to many teachers and it sponsored the growth of curriculum development units in several countries. A regional support service was also an outcome, in the form of the establishment of a curriculum development unit at USP.

The ongoing UNDP/Unesco/IOE Curriculum Development Project on Vocational Subjects (1983-87) is a success story of regional co-operation and in-country development of curricula in home economics, commercial studies and industrial arts subjects. The principle objectives of the project are:

- to appoint and train local staff to supervise curriculum production
- to establish curriculum development units, or consolidate existing units and to produce curricula in selected subjects

Except for Fiji all countries of the region have participated in this regional project. Curriculum development units were supplied with necessary equipment, and the IOE is responsible, with Unesco, for its implementation. It is basically an in-country project with a regional approach. Regional content is not mandatory for any country and at its regular meetings, discussions of regional elements of the programme may result in their substitution by local components. The selection of content and the training of teachers in curriculum development are the responsibility of each country and its local curriculum development centre.

The IOE has also been requested to examine the validity of the

tests used in secondary school selection in the Pacific, and the training of teachers in testing and evaluating in the classroom. Many achievement tests, in a variety of subjects, have already been developed for a number of countries. In secondary school management and administration some regional training seminars and workshops have been organised by the IOE supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat, some Australian institutions, the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration, and more recently Unesco. A handbook for headmasters was once planned for the region but has not materialised. The regional Unesco Office in Apia is likely to develop courses/workshops with the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), USP, Australia and New Zealand in areas such as educational administration and planning. In view of these developments, the regional input, at least in curriculum development and management in secondary education, might well increase in the near future.

Non-formal education

For nearly four decades the SPC has pioneered non-formal education activities in such fields as agriculture, health, nutrition, co-operative enterprises and women's affairs.

The churches too have a long and proven record in this field. They have introduced many innovative activities in education, for the unemployed urban youth, for prisoners in need of rehabilitation and general family education. One sees the commendable efforts of the churches in rural areas when one travels around the region.

USP centres in the region have also organised a multiplicity of non-formal education activities. Indeed, the creation of a new department under the Extension Services sector of USP bears witness to this commitment.

All governments in the region have non-formal education divisions under various ministries, usually agriculture, health, education, labour or women's affairs. Most of this educational work is geared especially to assist with rural development.

International agencies like the ILO, WHO and UNICEF, and some foundations too, are encouraging non-formal education activi-

ties in their respective areas. Some studies in rural development have been undertaken under their auspices.

Attempts have been made, nationally and regionally, to form co-ordinating bodies in the field. In Fiji one such body has been established but many regional attempts have failed. The long distances, isolation, high cost of air travel, vast variety of agencies, the many languages and dialects and the commitment of some agencies continue to present problems to the formation of co-ordinating bodies at national and regional level. Quite recently the three universities, USP, UPNG and Guam met at an all-Pacific Conference to co-ordinate activities in this field. It is too soon to estimate the success of this initiative. The Asia-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) is also interested in the formation of a co-ordinating body.

Despite these moves towards an organised system of co-ordination, it is likely that the regional contribution will have to come from a succession of seminars, conferences and workshops. The Commonwealth Youth Education Programme, located at USP, is the consequence of a regional co-ordinating effort, but other areas of focus have yet to produce the necessary thrust in the non-formal field.

The prospects for greater regional co-operation

A cynical observation on the issue of regionalism is that the Pacific Ocean (or at least 29 million square miles of it) provides the only unity in the region. Yet the geography, history and development policies of the islands reveal a discernible commonality in such aspects as their insularity, 'islandness', smallness, and isolation, in addition to the fact that historically these territories were once all colonies of Britain, with one or two exceptions.

These common features have been partly responsible for the similarity of their educational problems. For example, on a rough estimate there is an average of one school to every 600-700 inhabitants in the region. This distribution of course varies from country to country, but it indicates that there are schools in all the inhabited islands which make up these micro-states. Primary schools on the

average tend to be small, especially in the rural areas. Secondary education is mainly urban centred, but where it does exist in the rural areas it tends to be in the form of boarding institutions.

Historically, education was provided by the missions but later, especially after independence, the governments of these territories increasingly assumed control over, and financial responsibility for, their own education services. But partly because of the physical features of these islands the cost of providing education has been high, compared with some other developing countries. Government expenditure in this area varies from 4 per cent to 12 per cent of GNP. This occurs despite the fact that the contributions to education by missions and from private sources are still quite large, both in terms of personnel and finance.

The development expenditure in some countries, like Kiribati and Tuvalu, is financed wholly by foreign agencies, while in Tonga and Samoa the percentage is also very high. This makes it very difficult for these countries to assume any substantial degree of independence and they sometimes continue to be subject to the dictates or wishes of the donor countries in respect of the form of education developed. In addition to these common problems there have also been some common themes in the development policies of the island states including the search for greater economic independence and self-reliance, more equitable distribution of resources, and increased economic growth, which includes increased production and diversification.

In the field of education it has been pointed out by Tupeni Baba, an eminent Pacific educator, that micro-states seem to go through common stages of development and face common issues. Baba has summarised the development process that has taken place in education in the region as:

- the localisation of curricula and examinations
- upgrading the quality of teachers
- providing greater access to basic education, especially at the primary level

- the provision of more appropriate agro-technical education
- development of tertiary education within the South Pacific

An almost inevitable outcome of the need to depend on foreign aid for education is that the region is likely to have great difficulty in adapting existing forms of education to its own needs and problems, if these are seen to be in conflict with the aims, objectives and goals of the donor countries. The effect on the personality development of the peoples of the region is also not to be overlooked. In an absorbingly interesting book, *The Tales of the Tikongs*, by an academic of the region, Epeli Hau'ofa, the following advice is given on obtaining foreign aid:

But you must remember in dealing with foreigners, never appear to be too smart; it's better that you look humble and half-primitive, especially while you are learning the ropes, and try to take off six stones. It's necessary that we're seen to be starved and needy. The reason why Tiko gets very little aid money is that our people are too fat and jolly. I wish the government would wake up and do something about it.

The continued influence of aid on the development of education in the region is seen, for example, in the many expatriates who are working in this field. Their influence on education policy formation and execution is very marked and their expertise usually comes combined in a package of aid to education from donor countries. As regional educators begin to evolve policies and strategies for educational development, which they see as particularly applicable to the area, they are still likely to find the paternalism of the colonial times hindering their ability to proceed with such plans. This is not to deny the need for both expertise and aid to education in the South Pacific. But a greater sensitivity to peoples, their cultures and their aspirations has to be cultivated by experts brought into the region if their work is to be more productive and meet with the hopes and desires of the population of the islands.

The high cost of educational supplies, especially scientific

instruments, is an area of common concern for which a regional solution needs to be found. A proposal a few years ago to establish a regional centre for manufacturing scientific instruments and educational aids has been shelved. There are other perennial problems in educational administration and management; the distribution of textbooks and school supplies, supervision of schools in the more remote islands, the construction of low-cost buildings, the production of readers and textbooks in local languages and in English, all of which can usefully be tackled on a regional basis. But within the present context of the South Pacific islands the question which arises is: can the regional approach in education be further developed to resolve such problems, or would nationalism increasingly get in the way of regional co-operation? And what would be the likely effect on such co-operation if a bilateral approach to aid, rather than a regional one, continues to be pursued by the donor countries? While, as was previously indicated, regionalism has been approached pragmatically in the South Pacific, there has, so far, been no overall proposal for a consistent and common approach to deal with these problems, except in very specific areas of mutual benefit to individual countries.

But with high costs of providing and administering services in the region, the various states are likely to continue depending on foreign aid and try to maximise the possibility of securing bilateral aid, often at the expense of regional co-operation, if these are the conditions under which aid is most likely to be forthcoming. In such a situation it would not be easy to develop a common approach or solutions to regional issues and problems. Even the USP is now being critically assessed by the participating countries, in terms of the benefits each receives from the institution, rather than in respect of the contribution which the university makes to the region as a whole.

However, there are some positive signs that in the future there might be more regional co-operation in the solution of these common educational problems which the islands of the South Pacific face. For example, the interest shown by the Commonwealth Secretariat in the education of small nation states along with the work

of the regional Unesco office in Apia might eventually result in the development of some common policy approaches to the major educational issues which the countries in the region face. The USP also, with its determination to grapple with higher educational problems affecting the region as a whole, would continue to contribute to a solution of these problems, in a typically 'Pacific Way'. Despite these hopes and possibilities, co-operation in education will continue to be a burning question for the small nation states of the South Pacific. Tupeni Baba has surmised that:

The best prospect is the development of interdependence between the islands and the metropolitan powers, but the chance of this working in favour of the islands depends on the ability of the island states to continue their own system of co-operation on economic, political and educational matters.

11 Education in the Indian Ocean and the Regional Dimension

Ranjit Goordyal and Zotique Pragassen

This chapter is a fusion of two contributions; from Ranjit Goordyal in Mauritius and Zotique Pragassen in Seychelles.

Following a brief contextual discussion, aspects of the education systems of small states in this region are reviewed highlighting contrasting situations as reflected in indices such as scale, language and external links. Sri Lanka and Malagasy Republic, although island nations in the Indian Ocean, have been excluded on grounds of their relatively large scale. Regional co-operation is examined in terms of the associations that have been formed, such as the Commission of the Indian Ocean and the Association des Institutions de Recherches et de Developpement dans l'Ocean Indien.

The small Commonwealth states of the Indian Ocean region

Some six independent countries and one French Departement, La Reunion, make up the Indian Ocean region. These island territories are situated in the western part of the Indian Ocean. Four of them, Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles and Comoros, fit into the category of small states. Of these, Comoros is not a Commonwealth member.

A clear difference between the Indian Ocean region and the Caribbean and South Pacific regions is immediately apparent, for the Indian Ocean small states are fewer in number and less clustered. Maldives in the north is about two thousand kilometres from Seychelles at the equator, which is in turn about the same distance from Mauritius in the south. This partly explains why the type of regional co-operation, *inter alia* in education, which has developed in the Caribbean and South Pacific, is almost entirely lacking in the Indian Ocean region.

There are, however, numerous similarities between the small Commonwealth states of the region. They are all tropical island countries which have experienced British influence, have limited resources, have in recent times turned to tourism as a major source of income, and, since attaining independence, have committed much of their resources to education, which is seen as a key element in national development.

Alongside these similarities there are significant differences. In terms of geography, the main land area of Mauritius is a compact island 1,100 miles square, separated by 350 miles of ocean from its smaller island of Rodrigues. By contrast, both Seychelles and Maldives are archipelago states, the former consisting of over 100 islands, a third of which are granitic islands, whereas the population of the Maldives is distributed over some 200 islands (out of a total of 1200) with a heavy concentration on the main island of Male. Both Maldives and Seychelles experience transportation and communication problems on a larger scale than Mauritius. By contrast, the topography of the main island of Mauritius has facilitated a well developed road system which permits easy access throughout, leaving only Rodrigues relatively isolated from the national core. Mauritius has a plantation economy with sugarcane as the main crop, but it also has the resources and conditions to sustain a viable range of industries for local consumption as well as for export. Thus it has a much more diversified economy than most other small states of the Commonwealth. Seychelles and Maldives, less fortunate in land

resources and potential, have placed much hope and trust in the development of marine resources within their respective economic zones. They are relying on fishing and eventually fish processing to provide further employment, though in common with Mauritius they have both developed tourism.

There are also dissimilarities between the island states of the Indian Ocean region in terms of colonial legacy. Mauritius became independent in 1968, and Seychelles eight years later in 1976. The Maldives had never really been part of the British Empire and had always administered itself, only turning to Britain for its defence and in foreign affairs, a role which Britain relinquished in 1965. It was only in 1982 that Maldives joined the Commonwealth. Politically, Mauritius is a monarchy with Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state, whilst Seychelles and Maldives are republics with a president as both head of state and of government. A further difference is that Seychelles is a one-party state. Whilst all three belong to the non-aligned movement, Seychelles is often considered as the most radical of the three, *inter alia* in terms of educational reform.

There are also cultural, linguistic and religious differences between the Indian Ocean states: Maldives is Islamic; Seychelles is Christian; Mauritius is multi-faith with Hinduism, Christianity and Islam being the main religions.

The people of the Maldives have successfully preserved their culture, and it is only now, as the country opens up, through tourism, that outside influences are slowly influencing traditional patterns of life. The Maldives Government sees education playing a major role in responding to the changing aspirations of its people. The degree to which they succeed in reaching a workable language policy in education as between Divehi and English will be fundamental to possibilities of reaching their developmental objectives.

Mauritians have traditionally maintained close ties, through family connections and otherwise, with their countries of origin, in particular India. Thus they have been more successful than Seychelles in resisting the fragmentation of the social structures of their countries of origin during the colonial period; and have retained much of their

own cultures, which have been strengthened since attaining independence. Both Mauritius and Seychelles experienced the successive colonial attentions of France and Britain, paralleled to some extent in the Caribbean by Dominica and St Lucia and in the South Pacific by Vanuatu. In consequence, Creole is the social language of many Mauritians and Seychellois. Indeed in the latter Creole enjoys the same official status as English and French. By contrast, in Mauritius, Creole, although spoken by the majority, is not officially recognised, and Mauritians find it more prudent to maintain English as their official language, while supporting French, along with a number of oriental languages.

While the Maldives was populated long ago by direct migration from Asia, the population of both Mauritius and Seychelles was a product of European colonialism, there having been no indigenous population prior to that event. In consequence, ethnic diversity is a feature, especially of Mauritius, with African, Asian and European components all represented. As in the West Indies, slavery was fundamental to the plantation economies established, with indentured labour arriving upon the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833. Not surprisingly therefore, complex associations of race, colour and class exist and have implications for education.

Education systems

The education systems of the small Commonwealth states of the Indian Ocean have inevitably emerged from the mixed cultural and colonial legacies outlined above.

Maldives

Education in the Maldives is not compulsory, and schools are both state and privately run, the latter being in the majority. Pre-school education exists mainly in the form of Koranic Schools where the principal activity is the learning of the Koran in Arabic. Formal education continues after that in traditional Koranic Schools, Divehi-medium primary schools, or increasingly in English-medium primary

and secondary schools. The latter have also adopted a formal curriculum which leads to 'O' level examinations and facilitates further 'A' level study at the local Science Education Centre established in 1979. Opportunities also exist for further academic, technical and professional studies abroad. The majority of Maldivians are literate. A basic education programme established in 1980 has attracted 10,000 adults to date.

One of the main problems caused by geographical isolation and the size of the communities on the 200 or so inhabited atolls is the provision of adequate facilities. It is only on Male, the main island, that adequate facilities and well trained teachers are available. Consequently school attendance is low. This has led to increasing interest in distance teaching methods, including educational broadcasting.

Mauritius

Responsibility for education is vested in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Education is free at the primary and secondary levels up to the age of 20 but not compulsory. At the pre-primary level there are more than 1,000 schools providing education to some 20,000 children in the age group 3-5. Within the core of the system, Mauritius has a 6 + 5 + 2 structure. Primary education lasts six years for most of the pupils and a seventh year for those who are unsuccessful at the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) examinations. Those who pass the CPE are admitted to secondary schools where after five years they take the Cambridge School Certificate examinations. Those who pass the School Certificate Examinations with at least four credits and have not reached the age of 19 years on 31 December of the previous year qualify for the two year Cambridge Higher School Certificate course.

There are three major tertiary institutions in the country; the University of Mauritius (UM 1965), the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI 1969) and the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE 1973). The University has three schools: the School of Agriculture, the School of Administration and the School of Industrial Technology. It provides certificate, diploma and degree courses, and is growing.

For example, a department of law and a medical research centre were opened in 1986. Mauritian students who are awarded scholarships by the French government do part of their course at the University of Reunion. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute has as its main aim the promotion of Indian culture in Mauritius and runs specialised courses in languages, humanities, sociology, philosophy, art, vocal and instrumental music, dance and sculpture. The Mauritius Institute of Education is responsible for curriculum development and teacher training at all levels. It is presently reviewing the primary and lower secondary school curriculum and running certificate, diploma and post-graduate certificate courses in teacher education for teachers at the primary and secondary level. All three tertiary institutions are also involved in research work.

The Mauritian system of education is relatively large, complex, well-supported and with distinct areas of innovation as illustrated by the development of the Lycee Polytechnique and the Mauritius College of the Air.

Seychelles

Unlike the other two states, all educational institutions in Seychelles are state run and non-fee paying. There is also a compulsory primary phase of nine years duration, from age six to fifteen approximately. A two-year pre-primary phase admits all children of three and a half years of age.

Since taking control of pre-primary education in 1980, the state has spared no effort in providing adequate facilities and qualified personnel for this level. Of the children eligible in 1985, over 80 per cent attended the first year and close to 100 per cent the second year of pre-primary school. Secondary education is also accessible to all who apply on completion of their primary education; close to 90 per cent of 1986 primary school leavers have opted for it. This phase of education takes place in four residential villages of the National Youth Service, and is of two-years duration. During this time the students follow a secondary curriculum, share a common learning and living experience, and participate in activities aimed at developing

self-reliance, commitment to society, and community spirit. The National Youth Service also has as its objective to prepare students for either the world of work or for further academic and vocational studies at the Polytechnic.

Established in 1983, the Polytechnic regrouped all the former separate vocational schools and the 'A' level college. It has since expanded its range of courses to respond to the manpower needs of the country. Selection to the different courses is based on the number of places available, the student's own interest, and his performance profile within the National Youth Service.

The latter is largely based on continuous assessment. The courses of the Polytechnic are of one to four years' duration, and prepare students for both locally and externally moderated examinations. Almost all the external examinations are from British examination bodies such as London and Cambridge Universities (for 'O' and 'A' levels), the City and Guilds of London Institute, and Pitman, reflecting continuing dependence on Britain. This also provides international recognition and permits ready access to foreign institutions for further training which the country requires and which, due to its size, it is unable to provide. However, the cost of training outside Seychelles, and usually outside the region, can be very prohibitive. Even assistance, when obtained, converts into fewer training awards than would be possible were Seychelles not so small and remote.

This forces Seychelles to search for alternatives such as part-time Diploma courses and post 'A' level courses in fields such as teacher education within the Polytechnic. There are plans to obtain external recognition for these courses as equivalent to year 1 or 2 of a degree course, which can then be completed abroad. This could effectively reduce the overall cost of education abroad. The Polytechnic also organises a wide range of courses for adults, including literacy classes which are held in the districts.

Educational issues

Curriculum development

Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles all engage in curriculum development programmes. In the case of the Maldives, the aim is to equip the future citizens with knowledge and skills to cope with the modern world. Expanding tourism and the development of the fishing industry demand expertise for which new forms of training are needed. Thus a marine studies course has been developed with assistance from Unesco. There are also bilateral agreements whereby countries such as Australia are assisting the Maldives with general education programme development in Mathematics, Science and English at Primary level, and to enable students to have access to 'O' and 'A' level education and further training abroad. In a sense there is a transformation from a culturally unique Maldivian curriculum to one which increasingly reflects outside influences.

Seychelles and Mauritius, on the other hand, having inherited a British-based education, are searching for something culturally more appropriate and more relevant to their needs. Whereas Mauritius has a sufficient number of trained people in the field of curriculum development, Seychelles still relies on help from outside, and its curriculum units remain inadequately staffed. Despite such constraints, Seychelles decided in 1981 to teach Creole, the mother tongue, and to use it as a medium of instruction in the early years of the primary cycle. This launched a major curriculum reform which was introduced in schools in 1982.

To a large extent expertise had to be local, in view of the language involved. This meant that the training of personnel and materials development had to take place concurrently. The overall cost of this ongoing reform is high in relation to the size of the population. It has involved a considerable amount of translation work. Mistakes could have been avoided if people had been more experienced, and if they had had more time. The time constraint did

not permit either the testing of materials or teacher involvement. However, the demands of this accelerated reform programme have given the country a core of about 20 fairly competent and confident curriculum developers, in a relatively short period of time. But there are limits to localisation imposed by its continuing dependence on British examinations, such as Cambridge.

In Mauritius, attempts by the Mauritius Institute of Education to localise the curriculum have also met with many difficulties, despite the fact that the Institute is very well equipped in comparison with Seychelles. Mauritius insists on internationally recognised certificates which give them access to further studies as well as employment abroad, and which many Mauritians seek.

Teacher supply

In Seychelles and Maldives, there is an acute shortage of teachers to cope with their expanding systems. Both countries still depend on expatriate teachers. Seychelles for instance recruits teachers from Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Britain and elsewhere; and Maldives is beginning to do likewise. But Maldives must face the particular problems of inducing teachers to serve on remote atolls with often inhospitable conditions, and poor educational facilities. More able teachers are attracted to the capital, Male, thus maintaining and even deepening a marked disparity in the quality of education as between the islands. Mauritius, with more teachers than it needs, is focusing on improving the quality of its teaching force for both primary and secondary levels. Training is given by the Mauritius Institute of Education. In Seychelles, considerable importance is being given to attracting young and suitably qualified Seychellois to take up teaching, as well as raising the level of teachers already in the service. Less fortunate Maldives must, for the time being at least, resort to unqualified and temporary personnel, particularly for the more isolated communities. However, considerable efforts have been made there in recent years to target particular groups for professional development overseas, especially the atoll head teachers and tutors responsible for initial teacher training utilising facilities in Britain, Singapore and Malaysia.

The regional dimension

Regional co-operation in the socio-economic sector in the Indian Ocean is still in the budding stage. Co-operation amongst the countries started only a few years ago and very few regional projects in the education sector have materialised. The basis for regional co-operation starts with exchanges in the commercial and economic fields which are the priorities for the countries in the Indian Ocean. In 1986 a convention was signed between Mauritius and Madagascar to encourage trade between the two countries. According to the agreement trade will take place on an exchange basis and after a period of time only the excess of the import over the export is paid for in foreign exchange. Such a policy is to the advantage of both partners.

Regional associations

In addition to such bilateral arrangements, wider associations are beginning to take shape. Traditionally the people from the Indian Ocean states usually meet in international fora and very often outside the region. Regional co-operation was merely talked about until in 1982 the Governments of the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles established the Commission of the Indian Ocean. Later, Reunion, because of its location, took up membership. The object of the Commission is to promote regional co-operation in economic, commercial, cultural, judicial, scientific and social areas. It is presently involved in the implementation and planning of several projects in the following fields:

- 1 Agriculture and fisheries - tuna fishing, sugar cane, rice, meat and maize;
- 2 Meteorology, aviation and telecommunications;
- 3 Tourism and handicraft - production of a film and a book on the islands of the Indian Ocean, regional tourism and handicraft;
- 4 Education and culture - exhibitions of paintings, a regional training centre for trainers of technical and vocational training, an 'Academie Creole';
- 5 Energy - renewable energy and development of biogas.

A second organisation worthy of mention is the Fonds d'Aide a la Co-operation. Here the French Government has commenced the financing of a regional co-operation scheme beginning with Mauritius and Reunion. So far, the following aspects are developing in the field of education:

- 1 At the pre-primary and primary levels - fellowships for the education and training of teachers and inspectors;
- 2 At the secondary level - computer education, a school of music, and the training of technical education teachers.

Thirdly, there is the Association des Institutions de Recherches et de Developpement dans l'Ocean Indien (ARDOI). This was set up by Reunion in 1979 as a non-governmental organisation. Its major objectives in the fields of regional development and training are:

- to provide and co-ordinate exchange programmes in member states for teachers/researchers, consultants and experts
- to develop a comprehensive information, documentation, and dissemination structure in the region
- to initiate joint research projects in the fields of education, development, research, science and culture

The Chairmanship rotates from year to year among its member states - Reunion, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. AIRDOI was initially involved in language research but is now getting more involved in scientific and technological research in such fields as oceanography, energy and agrosiences. Its activities are financed through grants from the Commission of the European Community.

The Centre de Documentation, de Recherche et de Formation Indian-Oceanique (CEDEFRI) is a non-governmental organisation founded in Mauritius in 1981. Focusing on co-operation in research, documentation and training, it works in close collaboration with the ministries and parastatal bodies in Mauritius. A number of branches of CEDEFRI are working on the implementation of an 'Issue-Based Indian Ocean Network'.

CEDEFRI has already carried out several research projects, such as the evaluation of the research potential of Mauritius, agricultural diversification amongst small planters grouped into co-operatives, adult literacy and technical education.

Finally, there is the Association des Universités partiellement et entièrement de langue Française (AUPELF) which is a regional body dealing with university co-operation. The main objective of AUPELF is to promote inter-university exchanges and co-operation among its member states through the movement of professional and academic staff, exchange of research ideas and documents and participation of joint research ventures. The most recent AUPELF meeting was held in 1986 and was hosted by the University in Reunion. On that occasion participants discussed further co-operation in the form of a programme for information dissemination and development. The current Chairman of the AUPELF is the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius.

Prospects for regional co-operation

The five organisations listed above, while representing nascent regional co-operation have strong bilateral and external elements. This is partly due to the relative fragmentation of the region. Against such a background, where few obvious bonds exist between the small Indian Ocean states, it is understandable that little significant co-operation exists between them in the area of education. It is doubtful moreover that mutually beneficial co-operation as seen elsewhere can be successfully developed in this region between the Commonwealth member states, apart from exchange of information and recruitment of teachers, as in the case of Seychelles which recruits Mauritian and Sri Lankan teachers, as well as teachers of other nationalities. This phenomenon of recruitment of foreign teaching personnel is also being experienced by Maldives as its educational provision expands.

Mauritius is large enough to satisfy some of its more basic needs and is more pre-occupied with the tertiary level of education, which

by its very nature is more susceptible to bilateral and international co-operative agreements. Its primary and secondary level of education can find support from its comparatively well-developed tertiary level for programme development, for research and for training of its personnel.

By contrast tiny Seychelles, over fifteen hundred kilometres from the African continent and sharing few bonds with the Eastern African states, is perhaps the one most affected by the problem of isolation and limited resources, and is forced to venture further afield for assistance and co-operation. Even within the aforementioned Commission de l'Océan Indien, which groups the French-speaking states of the South-Western Indian Ocean, projects have yet to be formulated which are of concrete benefit to member states, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the field of education. Given this perspective, Seychelles seems to suffer particularly from the adverse affects of smallness and isolation, unable to pool its resources with compatible neighbours, as is the case for small Caribbean and Pacific states of the Commonwealth. Yet each of these states realises the necessity for links with the outside world if there is to be progress in the development of education. These countries are pursuing goals which cannot be met entirely by their own individual capacity, and which are not shared by their Indian Ocean neighbours; therefore, they have to turn to the neighbouring continents and further afield. Maldives for instance hosted an international meeting in July 1984 concerned with the formation of a South Asia association linking India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives. Given its Islamic dimension, the Maldives may well find and develop stronger bonds within such an association, and this will certainly have a bearing on its educational development.

Regional associations are very fragile and it takes a lot of give and take to make them function. At times national interests take the upper hand over regional interests and the association breaks down. Susceptibilities and mistrust between the member states add to the tensions and complexities of running such associations. In any case, the financing of regional exchanges and co-operation is a major

problem. It is noted that such exchanges materialise so long as it does not involve expenditure from the member states which already have balance of payment problems. So far, most of the regional co-operation that has been manifest in the Indian Ocean region has been financed by external sources such as the European Development Fund, the French Government and Unesco.

As far as the trio of small Commonwealth states in this region is concerned, the geographical, locational and cultural differences between them add further to the difficulties of co-operation in any regional sense. Maldives with its centuries-old Islamic culture, and not having undergone the usual colonial experience, has been able to retain its own distinctive form of education. It is only very recently that it has been forced, as a result of increasing involvement with the outside world, to introduce changes which it feels are necessary to cope with the demands arising from international interaction. On the other hand, Seychelles and Mauritius inherited at independence the usual pattern of British colonial education which has since been subject to scrutiny and varying degrees of change, with a view to developing a more appropriate and relevant system. The Seychelles has gone a lot further in this direction, despite a shorter post-independence history. This is due to the greater homogeneity of the Seychelles people, the country's insistence on its right of self-determination, and above all, the political will of the people in their determination to create a socialist society. In Mauritius, changes and reforms have been limited largely to the tertiary level, whilst the primary and secondary levels have remained virtually intact, as parents insist on the academic curriculum they are familiar with since colonial days. It should be no surprise, therefore, that different patterns of educational development are emerging in these three states.

Given this situation of disparity it is not likely that the kind of regional co-operation in education that exists in the clusters of small Commonwealth states of the Caribbean and South Pacific will be possible in the Indian Ocean region. The absence of a regional university is, of course, a constraint upon co-operation in this field.

It is much more likely that lower level co-operation through the organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences, funded from outside sources, will develop between the Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles. Despite the fact that each has its own network of external links, there could well be mutual benefit in educational development from drawing upon their common membership of the Commonwealth and the experience of small member states in other regions.

12 Caribbean Regionalism, Education and Marginality

Errol Miller

In discussing the regional dimension in the Caribbean as it affects educational provision and operation, Errol Miller concentrates on the issue of marginality. Reference was made to this condition in several of the papers presented to the Pan-Commonwealth Meeting in Mauritius on Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth (1985), where size, isolation and dependence were primary themes. For Miller, these defining characteristics are manifestations of the more basic condition of marginality.

After discussing the general notion of marginality Miller considers its educational implications, and the context of political change in the region over the past forty years. In particular, he examines the quantitative increase of educational provision and finds it lacking in respect of tackling the real problems of the mass of the Caribbean people. He finds that the particular problems of smallness have not been identified or addressed by those formulating policy and plans. There is, however, a considerable educational capacity within the region, but this has not addressed the task with sufficient radicalism. The University of the West Indies, having undergone an organisational reform may be becoming less regional, but he feels that the Caribbean Examinations Council still operates in this dimension.

There have also been important region-wide projects which have demonstrated the value of regional co-operation, especially to the smaller states.

Errol Miller sees the Caribbean 'at the crossroads', with education needing to be 'separated from partisan and insular politics'. In short, regional co-operation is imperative.

The context of Caribbean marginality

In the world community of nations small states are located on the periphery of power, status and wealth. They are unable to influence global outcomes so that these are consistent with their own interests. Their marginality has to be seen not only in terms of the variables mentioned above, but also in the culture that has emerged among the peoples of the region, which is an amalgam of European, Asian and African cultures. The locational and cultural marginality are closely related, and as power and economic relationships have changed, so too have values and customs. For example, Miami has replaced London as the cultural capital of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The peoples of the Caribbean have never accepted their marginality, and, as a result, this became a great source and motive for striving. One of the great hopes of political independence was the breaking away from the margin - both internally and externally. Similarly, the trend towards regional co-operation seemed to stem from increasing recognition that if these mini- or micro-states kept operating alone they were unlikely to achieve that break. Regional economic and political co-operation appear to offer greater possibilities of a future different from their historical position of marginality.

Even though Caribbean societies have been marginalised in an international context, there were certain sections of the population, mainly the white ruling class, who have benefited from this relationship. However, the blacks, at first through slavery, and the Indians through indentureship, were exploited by the system and became the marginalised sections of the population within these societies.

Since the granting of adult suffrage in the mid-1940s, the ethnic composition of the ruling class has changed somewhat but its basic relationships with marginalised groups have remained the same. Hence Caribbean societies are still marked by wide disparities in wealth, power and influence. Further, while the ruling class now has members from all social backgrounds there are still audible racial undertones in its relationship with the power sections of these societies. So there has not been that much change in attitudes and relationships between the current ruling elite and the marginalised groups, independence notwithstanding. The ruling class has partly sustained itself not only by virtue of wealth, status and influence but also by its relationship to the external powers of which the Caribbean states have become satellites.

Education and marginality

Education in the West Indies has always been caught up in the conflicts that have existed between the social segments of society. Originally the ruling class attempted to provide agricultural and vocational education for the masses with the object of keeping them in a subservient role, while seeking a more liberal education for their own children. But despite the efforts of the ruling groups to use education as a means of reproducing the existing social order, the marginalised masses saw it as an instrument of upward mobility by which hopefully they could improve their socio-economic position.

The educational systems have continued to reflect this history. The stamp of the past is easily discernible in both educational process and product. The educational system fosters a mentality which seeks authority outside of itself, is more likely to imitate than invent but at the same time is ruggedly individualistic with each person seeking his or her own salvation. These contrasting characteristics have led to numerous paradoxes. The most inventive and creative elements of Caribbean societies have often been the least educated. The most educated are often uncomfortable with and irrelevant to the main stream of local concerns and strivings, while the educational process

itself usually strips the individual of the distinctiveness of his/her Caribbean or national identity.

Education is still embraced by the mass of Caribbean peoples as an instrument of economic liberation and social mobility, a centrepiece of hope for which many sacrifices are made. Caught in this conflict of past history, present reality and future hopes some have taken the position that education has raised expectations which cannot be satisfied and as such is dysfunctional. A contrary view is that children and parents with expectations of the future created by circumstances other than education, view education as a legitimate means of achieving their goals. Should education not satisfy these expectations, other means will be found.

Political changes since 1945

In the post-war period two fundamental political changes have taken place in Commonwealth Caribbean societies. First there was the granting of adult suffrage which shifted some amount of political power to the marginalised groups and meant that their numerical superiority could be used legitimately through the political process to serve their interests. But while this shift in relationship has led to the democratisation of opportunities in many areas, including education, it would appear that neither the rate nor the quantum of change has been to the satisfaction of the marginalised groups, judged by the regularity with which governments have been changed in Caribbean states.

The second fundamental change was the achievement of political sovereignty by several Commonwealth Caribbean states. This has in effect changed the external political relationships of these states making them, in name at least, masters of their own destiny. Given both their marginal status in the world community as well as their marginal history, during the period since political independence these Caribbean states have shown a marked tendency to move toward a satellite relationship with existing world super-powers. Largely because of its geographical location as well as the similarities

between the United States and the Caribbean in terms of common Anglo-history and culture, Caribbean states increasingly are being drawn into a satellite relationship with the United States. The relationship that is beginning to consolidate bears many characteristics of the former relationship with Britain except that there is no longer a British Governor but an American Ambassador.

As a result the bilateral relationship that is coming into existence between each Caribbean state and the United States, seems to play a more dominant role than the multilateral relationships between the Caribbean states as a whole and the metropolitan powers. This is most clearly seen in the Caribbean Basin Initiative currently operative in the region in which each Caribbean state is competing independently in the American market without any regional co-operation.

Overall it could be said that Caribbean states have been moving from a colonial relationship with Britain to a satellite relationship with the United States of America with a brief interlude of so-called independence, and that their position of marginality both in terms of the external relationship and the plight of the poor in these countries has remained fundamentally the same.

Quantitative increases in education

Part of the reason for this state of affairs could be attributed to the fact that in both the post-war and post-independence periods educational reforms have concentrated on quantitative issues. In this regard the results have been impressive. Caribbean states have made significant progress in putting almost every child of primary school age in school, even if in some states their attendance is not as regular as would be desired. There has been significant expansion of secondary education. Some states have achieved the position where almost one hundred per cent of their 12-17 year age cohort are provided places in some type of secondary school. The larger Caribbean states have been able to achieve almost a fully trained primary teaching force, from a situation in the colonial period where less than fifty per cent of primary teachers were professionally trained. In addition, in the

post-war period there has been the establishment of university education within the region and significant expansion of tertiary education in each state. Taken as a whole the quantitative increases in educational provision in the post-independence period in Caribbean states are nothing short of spectacular. The major weakness, however, is that these increases have merely expanded the institutional provisions that were consistent with a colonial society while leaving the fundamental relationships within the societies basically unchanged. In a number of instances it would appear that the quantitative increases have made matters worse and basic problems more difficult to solve in the future.

It is in this context that one should assess international assistance through various multilateral and bilateral agencies. Their intervention in Caribbean states has not been neutral. While almost every project impacting on the educational system in expanding educational provision has been mooted as giving assistance to the poor, that is, the marginalised groups, those inputs do not appear to have served the interest of these groups despite the stated intentions. By and large these additional inputs simply helped to maintain the status quo. They have served the interests of the ruling minority.

An example of this is junior secondary schools built, with World Bank assistance, in almost all Caribbean states. They represent the largest single capital investment in the history of Caribbean education. Notwithstanding, these schools are not accepted by Caribbean societies, including the marginal groups, as bona fide secondary schools. Social demand is still for the traditional high schools of colonial fame. In other words, the institutions financed by the World Bank to bring about social equality and increased opportunity for the marginalised groups are not perceived by these groups to have served their interests and given half a chance they would remove their children from these schools and send them to the schools offering a liberal education that have their origins in colonial times. Several Caribbean states are now in the process of reforming junior secondary schools into more socially acceptable alternatives.

The sad benediction to this development is that the funds

borrowed to establish these schools are now part of the national debt being paid for by the people who do not accept them as serving their interest. By and large, local politicians and educational planners as well as external lending agencies and foreign consultants have prescribed for the marginalised groups that which they have in their wisdom conceived to be in the interest of the marginalised groups. The marginalised groups have not agreed.

Major issues

The major concern in the provision of education in the West Indies over the last twenty to thirty years has been to prepare an adequate supply of trained manpower to fit into the various job openings that might become available in existing occupational structures. As a result of this narrow focus, the educational system has left unaddressed major issues confronting small independent states.

One such issue is the nature and future of small states in the current world community of nations. This has been regarded largely as a political question and the subject of foreign policy. Failure to address such an essential question within Caribbean education would seem to leave open the possibility for the Commonwealth Caribbean states to follow their old colonial relationships under the aegis of one of the existing superpowers of the world. Basic questions concerning the marginality of these states and of the history of local elites forming linkages with external powers in order to perpetuate themselves to the disadvantage of the marginalised groups are left unaddressed. The fact that Caribbean peoples have never accepted their marginality and have constantly sought to overcome it in some way, often against the opposition of the ruling minorities whose interest it is to keep the marginal internal and external relations intact, is not addressed in any constructive way at any level of the educational system. Neither is any consideration given to harnessing the motives and the energies inherent in the position of marginality in the power sections of these societies. This would have the potential of unleashing creative energies and efforts, in fashioning new institutions and new forms of

provision in respect of these expectations and ambitions. Rather, the educational system seems directed more towards suppressing these energies and neutralising creativity.

A second major issue is the wide social disparities existing in many Caribbean societies. While certain concessions have been made, the recent economic crisis within the world community and the Caribbean, is reversing many of these gains and re-emphasising the deep divisions which have characteristically defined Caribbean societies. For example, in Jamaica, as a budget saving device, government has closed one teachers' college and one teacher education department of a community college despite the fact that the teacher-pupil ratio for primary education currently stands at one teacher to fifty-five students. By imposing this ratio the government has artificially created an over-supply of teachers and acting in accordance with this artificial situation it has proceeded to close teacher training institutions. Following this same pattern it has closed seven primary and all-age schools in remote rural areas of Jamaica in communities where there is no public transportation and where the nearest schools are at least three or four miles away. These communities have been traditionally those in which there has been the least participation in education and the highest rates of illiteracy. The closure of schools offering primary education in these areas is bound to have an adverse effect on literacy levels in some of the poorest and least educated rural communities in Jamaica. Certainly such measures are bound to increase the disparities between social groups in the society as well as between urban and rural areas.

One is not saying that the Jamaican government has willingly and enthusiastically carried out this reduction in educational services. It is operating within the context of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement which requires reduction in public expenditure including education. In carrying out these reductions the government appears to be in fact acting against its own best knowledge. This makes no difference to the consequences.

The overriding point here is that education has not been harnessed systematically to serve the ends of social integration and of

bridging the historic social divisions. Given the diversity of origin of Caribbean peoples and deep social divisions of the societies, the educational system must play the role of social broker in nation building. To a large extent this function of the education system and of the educational process has been neglected.

Another basic question is that of sovereignty. Why would a sovereign state act against its own best knowledge in implementing reductions in education? Caribbean states are certainly not in the position to exercise economic sovereignty. The vast majority of Caribbean economies are dependent economies. This means that the linkage of education to the economic system by definition makes it also subject to the same dependency relationships. In several Caribbean states capital development in education comes through foreign loans and grants. Increasingly, through the activities of the IMF, recurrent expenditures are also coming under external direction. Because education constitutes almost twenty per cent of the recurrent budget of most Caribbean states it is a significant item of recurrent expenditure that cannot escape fiscal policies that include reduction of public expenditure and particularly reduction in social services. The harsh reality is that several Caribbean states now have less effective control in determining directions in their educational system as independent states than they had when they were colonies. The essential question is whether education should be one of the areas of dependence as is the economy, or whether it should be an area of sovereignty. Or even more important, can one have sovereignty in the area of education in the situation of a dependent economy?

Another question is whether it is feasible for each Caribbean state to exercise absolute sovereignty in education without reference to any other country whatsoever? It is quite clear that no Caribbean country, including the larger countries of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Barbados and The Bahamas, is in a position in which it can be totally self-sufficient and self-reliant in educational provision. It is precisely at this point that the possibility of regional interdependence emerges not only as a desirable direction but rather as an absolutely essential one. The common history, common current

circumstances would suggest a common future. All of these would seem to suggest regional interdependence among sovereign Caribbean states as an absolute necessity.

Regional capacity in education

Over the last thirty years, particularly through the development of the University of the West Indies, the Caribbean has developed an indigenous capacity for both the maintenance and development of educational systems of the region. The region as a whole has moved away from a situation in which locals occupied subordinate positions while expatriates occupied the top positions. Over the last thirty years the Caribbean has developed a cadre of suitably trained nationals that currently man all levels of the educational system. This is true of all the leadership positions, in schools, as well as in ministries of education. In addition, again mainly through the University of the West Indies, a regional research capacity has been developed which has given the West Indies the capability of studying perennial problems and identifying feasible solutions.

The major criticism that can be levelled at local educators - planners, curriculum developers, measurement specialists, technology specialists, administrators at both the central and institutional levels and teacher educators - is that the substitution of local personnel for expatriate personnel has not necessarily led to any fundamentally different strategies, approaches, outlooks or practices. By and large, these highly trained Caribbean nations have been largely imitative in their practices. They have worked within paradigms that have been borrowed from outside of the region. When this is taken in context it may seem understandable that in the first decades, in which the major task was the transfer of responsibility from expatriates to locals, the first actions of the locals would be to justify their own capabilities and this could only be done within existing standards which were externally defined. From this point of view, it can be explained as an expected first response.

Education by definition is both culture and society specific. Not many universals have emerged in any area. It still admits of the impromptu, the virtuoso performance, use of the peculiar circumstance and the intuitive understanding of the performers, although these performers may draw on findings and experiences that can be objectively verified in different locations. The specific challenge that therefore exists now for Caribbean educators is one for the development of innovative and creative responses within the educational system worked out on the basis of first principles applied to particular problems facing our educational systems and not necessarily based on responses elsewhere. Secondly, the proper use of local talent through co-operative sharing and pooling of efforts. As one travels through the Caribbean region and speaks to educators working in the same area one finds an absence of knowledge of what each is doing. This insularity leads to isolation and needless repetition. Mechanisms are needed to ensure regional pooling and sharing of expertise to the common good of all. It is necessary at this point to note the regional mechanisms that have been developing for regional co-operation in education.

The University of the West Indies

First and foremost among the mechanisms that have been established for regional co-operation is the University of the West Indies. This institution has made an inestimable contribution to regional co-operation not only in terms of being an institution which has a presence throughout the region, but also by virtue of the fact that it has brought people from the different Caribbean territories together in a single place providing them with a shared experience. The recent restructuring of the university has focused on the needs of the campus territories, Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica, and the devolving of financial responsibility to the campus governments. This will make the university on its various campuses less regional in focus. The future of the university seems to rest along the lines of the integration of other tertiary institutions, which currently are all national enterprises,

into a college system under the umbrella of the University of the West Indies' academic mechanism. CARICOM Ministers of Education have already taken a policy decision to open their tertiary institutions to nationals from the various countries. While this has been more a statement of principle, than a corner-stone of action, it underscores the underlying principle that in tertiary and higher education, in order to create the critical mass necessary for the development of viable programmes at this level, it is necessary for Caribbean countries to pool their several efforts.

Mico College in Jamaica, in developing its Special Education Programme, now accepts students from the region and in so doing is currently serving the needs of the entire Caribbean. This has been through the instrumentality of the Government of the Netherlands which has been providing scholarship funds for Caribbean students to prepare themselves for work in the field of Special Education. The same is true of programmes at the College of Arts, Science and Technology (CAST) in Jamaica which is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in providing scholarships for students from other Caribbean territories. The Polytechnic in Barbados as well as the John Donaldson Institute in Trinidad are other tertiary level institutions which cater to students outside of their national borders.

The Caribbean Examinations Council

A second major development in regional co-operation is that of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), set up by governments to be the external examining body for secondary education in the region. The Caribbean Examinations Council which started to offer subjects in 1979, will by the 1990s be offering all subjects at 'O' level and also subjects at 'A' level. It has been taking over from Cambridge and London Universities examining functions in the Caribbean region. By assuming these functions as mandated by Caribbean governments, CXC has *de facto* taken over curriculum development in secondary education in the Caribbean by virtue of the fact that the external examinations prescribed the syllabuses for secondary schools.

While each national government will continue to determine access to secondary education, CXC will by its examinations and syllabuses determine its content. CXC now takes over the responsibility as a regional mechanism not only to provide syllabuses with Caribbean examples but also to lay the foundations for Caribbean peoples to understand their own societies as well as to develop a world view. While CXC's first efforts have been concentrated on subjects, it still has the challenge of developing an integrated curriculum with themes running across the various subject areas.

The UWI/USAID Primary Project

An interesting development of the 1980s was the UWI/USAID Primary Education Project. USAID, using the University of the West Indies as a regional intermediary, collaborated with ten Caribbean governments in the development of primary curricula, including teacher and student materials in four subject areas: English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. The Project involved Barbados, the Windward and Leeward Islands and Belize. Through this project, involving Caribbean personnel only, a common primary curriculum was developed in the four subject areas mentioned. A number of aspects of this project are worthy of note. Firstly, it was funded by USAID but did not involve the use of US personnel or methodologies. In other words, the project did not bear the dependency stamp of US economic policy in the Caribbean region. This project allowed Caribbean personnel to carry out the research, development and innovations prescribed by the project. Secondly, it involved UWI as the regional intermediary linking the various territories. The Primary Project was a sub-project of a larger operation. Other components of this major project were a secondary sub-project involving CXC as the regional intermediary, as well as the Caribbean Development Bank as a regional intermediary in the development of primary school buildings. In other words, what this project proved was that there were regional bodies in various fields with the capacity to mount successfully large scale programmes of regional co-operation in education. The three sub-projects were

carried out within the specified time frame and budget and accomplished the stated objectives. In other words, the overall project tested and proved the capability of regional co-operation mechanisms currently existing in the region.

In addition, it pioneered a successful model of linking several sovereign governments, with an international donor agency through regional intermediaries of proven capability. The third aspect of this project is that it pioneered co-operation in primary education. This has been an area in which there has been a great deal of insularity and isolation in the past. For the first time, regional governments were co-operating and pooling their efforts in tackling problems at this level of the education system. The economies of scale that can be achieved by having common curricula at this level are obvious. This is especially important where parents have to provide books so necessary for the delivery of basic education. With the escalation in the cost of books and generally depressed economies, it is imperative that costs be kept as low as possible.

The second important aspect of the project is that when one looks at many of the small systems, for example St Kitts with twenty-five primary schools, British Virgin Islands with fourteen schools, Montserrat with twelve schools, it is virtually impossible for these small systems to establish curriculum units in their several ministries capable of maintaining curricula at this level. By sharing regional expertise through a curriculum development unit located in the University, it was possible to draw together an expert team of Caribbean nationals from different Caribbean territories who then composed a viable regional unit. Although this project is now over, the lessons learned are important and the challenges to Caribbean governments for continued co-operation in the possible emergence of a common primary curriculum in the region is clear. The benefits are enormous, the technology and the methodologies have been pioneered and proved successful, the rest is a matter of political will.

The Caribbean at the crossroads

Commonwealth Caribbean states approached nationhood along a federal path. Insularity defeated federation. The result was the establishment of twelve small nation states. After twenty years experience, Caribbean peoples are increasingly questioning the suitability of the nation state concept to Caribbean reality. There are voices now calling for a new federation.

While debate continues about the appropriate political framework, Commonwealth Caribbean countries have created regional structures to promote co-operation between them. These include CARICOM, the Caribbean Development Bank and co-operation in meteorological services. The University of the West Indies and the West Indies Cricket team existed before and survived the break up of federation. They remain focal points of Caribbean co-operation.

Nevertheless, Caribbean states are at the crossroads. Now that the euphoria of self-rule is over, the stark and harsh realities of internal and external relationships have to be faced, and basic questions have to be answered. These include: will these states continue to be satellites of powerful countries; is it the destiny of the Caribbean states to be the satellite of one or the other of the superpowers; how can these small states retain some autonomy in the world community? Answers to these questions have important implications for education because it has to do with how future generations are socialised and in addition, how the socialising patterns of the past can be reversed. In terms of internal social relationships the fundamental question is, how long will societies in the Caribbean continue to remain viable entities without dealing with the wider social disparities that currently exist in them?

It would appear that regional co-operation has a fundamental place and an important role to play in the future development of these small nation-states. Caribbean countries acting together can have a more significant input and impact on the world community than

acting singly. In addition, if Caribbean states were to pool their shared expertise and knowledge in an effort to work together, they would be better able to reduce the internal disparities within their societies, as well as being better equipped to deliver the services and provision required.

In all of this education has an important part to play in developing both the ethos and the understanding which must be the foundation of such co-operation. It requires that curricula at all levels focus on Caribbean content and on Caribbean unity. Caribbean peoples from their earliest ages need to be socialised to perceive a regional identity and to understand the necessity of regional co-operation. In other words, education has a pro-active role to play in the development of regional co-operation. Hence regional co-operation is both an end in itself and a means to an end.

One source of the inspiration in all of this has to be the West Indies Cricket team. Acting singly, not even the mighty Barbados may have been able to conquer the world on the cricket field. But acting together the pooled resources of the region are sufficient for the Caribbean to emerge in the world cricket community as a significant force.

A final issue deals with the interventions of external agencies. It goes without saying that interventions into any situation are seldom neutral. It would appear that most of the interventions, certainly within the last twenty to thirty years, have benefited those already in power or those with wealth, or those already with high social status rather than the marginalised and dispossessed. This is despite the fact that the vast majority of interventions are couched in the rhetoric of equality of opportunity with stated intentions to assist the marginalised. Part of the problem resides in the fact that these interventions have prescribed what was considered to be for the good of the marginalised. If the results to date are unintended then it needs to be pointed out that planning and development have ignored Caribbean history and social structure. In impacting on Caribbean realities more than economic knowledge is required. Meaningful impact requires an understanding of its sociology, its history and its psychology.

Narrowly conceived and hastily constructed actions responding to immediate needs seem destined to lead to frustration by the failure to achieve desired outcomes. Nowhere has this been more obvious than in the field of education.

The Caribbean in the latter half of the 1980s has a cadre of qualified professionals who are nationals of the region. They run the system on a day to day basis. In addition, they have inputs into plans and developments. The central question becomes this: to what extent will these professionals take responsibility for educational outcomes? To what extent will they derive their own mandate for action from the strivings of Caribbean peoples to overcome marginality, internal and external? To what extent will they serve the interests of the social and economic status quo and of foreign penetration of the society through the educational system? Will they be agents of insularity or of regional co-operation? Certainly these professionals have a significant part to play in the directions taken by Caribbean governments and peoples, for they are a critical part of the leadership, educational and otherwise, in the region.

The clear indication from the history and experience of Caribbean people is that education must contribute the following:

- 1 The promotion of values and views authenticated by and derived from Caribbean experiences and realities. This is essential if Caribbean culture is to move from being an amalgam of disparate elements dominated by external power relations, to being an integrated coherent whole.
- 2 Help to prevent the penetration and domination of Caribbean societies by the ideologies and cultures of the superpowers by the promotion of critical independent thought and confidence in indigenous patterns and practices.
- 3 Assistance to facilitate and enhance the empowerment of the marginalised groups through access to quality education at all levels.

If education is going to serve the end of regional autonomy and equality of opportunity then a few harsh realities must be faced. Firstly, superpowers cannot be expected to aid education which will diminish their penetration of Caribbean societies. External borrowing and aid cannot continue to be the source of financing educational developments. Caribbean peoples must again finance capital and recurrent costs in education. New formats for financing education need to be worked out, and new ways have to be found to combine individual fees with public voluntary contributions and government subvention so that educational development can be under local and regional control. If Caribbean peoples are to think for themselves and develop their own ideas and ideals then we must be prepared to pay for it.

Secondly, the educational mandate of politicians and professionals is the development of all the people not the maintenance of the status quo. If local resources are to be fully mobilised for the support of education then parents and students, after conducting their own rate of returns analysis, must be convinced that the sacrifice is worth it. A common failing of Caribbean societies is that the poor majority pays for the high living standards of the privileged minority. This pattern is not unknown in education in the past. Future educational developments must include restructuring of the educational system so that it meaningfully serves the marginalised groups in the various societies. Minority interests cannot continue to dominate institutional provision and access to opportunity at all levels.

Thirdly, for a period at least, education needs to be a matter of national and regional unity separated from partisan and insular politics. The broad support required, the fundamental changes that are necessary and the time that such transformation will take, make continuity a vital and essential element. In addition, consensus is indispensable. The educational developments envisaged here must survive changes of government, cabinet reshuffles and the transfer of bureaucrats.

While the prospects of national and regional unity on educational development are quite daunting, the desire of Caribbean peoples to be self-determining, authentic and respected in the world community runs so deep that it would appear that the political will for national and regional unity on educational development in service of these ends can be found.

The destiny of the small nation states which make up the Commonwealth Caribbean cannot merely be to become a pale imitation of the industrialised and technological advanced countries. To find their destiny the Caribbean must overcome the past, face the harsh truths of the present and chart bold new paths for the future. Such a scenario becomes much more possible if there is a strong and active co-operation among the many small nation states in the region.

13 Multilateral Assistance to Education in the Pacific Island States

A view from Unesco/ SOPAC

The views expressed in this paper are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Unesco or the Pacific States.

Peter Higginson

Peter Higginson examines the provision of multilateral assistance to the small states of the Pacific in relation to the variables of scale, isolation and dependence. He finds that all three factors have constrained the effectiveness of educational aid. He considers the mismatch between western models of educational provision and the realities of the small island context. Certain conventions such as the counterpart and modes of costing are critically assessed. Despite the problems, Higginson concludes that there is an increasing appreciation on the part of donors of the special situations obtaining in small island states leading to the imperative of flexibility. He cites the current pre-vocational curriculum project in the South Pacific as an example of improved practice. With increased appreciation of micro-planning, the interest now developing in respect of the educational development of small island states can be directed more effectively.

Preamble

That the Commonwealth Secretariat has taken a lead in exploring the conceptual and operational significance of smallness in programming external assistance in education can only be a source of abiding satisfaction for the United Nations specialised agencies, especially Unesco. At the same time, the reasons for this lead, or more properly, the lag on the part of the multilaterals, deserve investigation because the answers shed light on why certain existing intervention strategies under-perform and how they can be improved.

Unesco's involvement with small island states is theoretically as old as the organisation. It became a reality from the time Pacific countries became Member States. Where the Pacific is concerned, however, it is really only in the past year or so that a nascent but focused search for strategies for cost effective co-operation is beginning to take place, and this is due both to the groundwork laid by the Commonwealth Secretariat, publicly acknowledged at the Fifth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education and those responsible for Economic Planning in Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, 4-11 March, 1985 - MINEDAP 5) and to the recent presence of Unesco in the Pacific, made possible by the establishment, in September 1984, of the Unesco Office for the Pacific States (Unesco/SOPAC), in Apia, Western Samoa.

A number of difficulties have arisen during the first two years of the operation of the Unesco office in the South Pacific. They relate to a considerable extent to the three variables - scale, isolation and dependence - examined so fruitfully at the Commonwealth Secretariat's Mauritius Conference. This paper proposes to try to identify and, where possible, to explain these difficulties. It is felt that they are typical of the experience of many agencies working in the Pacific, and that they are a direct result of the poor communications between the multilaterals and the small island states of the region.

Scale

Turning first to the issue of scale, it is clear that these states are penalised because of their size, probably not maliciously, but not always inadvertently either. It has for all intents and purposes only been since MINEDAP 5 that the Pacific was heard from – or indeed heard of. The claims of small island states for due attention and a fair share of Unesco's resources are frequently lost in the better practised and more compelling rhetoric of their giant neighbours to the west and northwest.

Smallness has meant that the Pacific states, which typically have fewer people in their education ministries, frequently cannot release their staff or indeed even afford to pay for them to attend international policy making and programming conferences. If no one is present to defend their interests they get little or nothing: 'les absents ont toujours tort'. Even when a representative is sent, it is not uncommon for the participant from small Pacific states to find that the oratorical and corridor negotiating skills of large country conference-goers have been raised to the level of a performing art over the years, with the result that the interests of small countries, if not actually shut out beforehand as a result of deals already struck, are not conveyed through the polished presentation necessary to mobilise significant support from the floor for their views.

Smallness holds other disadvantages for island states. They exist both in respect to Unesco and the funding agencies. Technical staff posted at headquarters and the Bangkok Regional Office are much in demand to mount or backstop technical assistance projects in member states. Faced with the necessity of choosing between servicing a large or a small country, they tend to be compelled to opt for the former. Indeed, as New Zealanders will confirm, it is not uncommon for small countries, be they developing small island states or industrialised nations, to be gently but firmly reminded of their relative importance in the larger scheme of things.

Where UNDP is the funding source, as it is for the vast majority of multilateral projects, small island states are also disadvantaged by

the procedures by which funding decisions are made. There is a traditional design which determines the allocation of funds for supporting country programmes which is fixed for each country by UNDP. It determines the budget for a particular project and the amount of personnel to be allocated. The scaling of available resources according to size is not necessarily accompanied by the reduction of other inputs, especially personnel costs, which are available to a country. The ultimate outcome of this is that funds for a project mainly comprise personnel costs. An example of this was the case of Vanatu where one project consisting of only one international input - a resident expert - was going to use up over 30 per cent of the country's allocation of aid from its Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) which represents its total budget support under its country programme.

To counter this tendency, UNDP is increasingly favouring, albeit reluctantly, government execution of projects so that agency overheads are not charged to the IPFs. In theory, this means that the governments are responsible for everything from recruitment to backstopping and project management. In practice, because small island administrative structures are already overtaxed, the UNDP representatives have to take on these functions themselves, something they are not set up to handle. Many IPF funded projects are therefore carried out 'in consultation' with Unesco. This euphemism for free service is bearable for the time being because the volume of work is still small but it is clear that if it increased dramatically, Unesco could not long survive on such an arrangement without a major restructuring of its staff and methods of work.

While UNDP seeks to leave the IPF funded projects to the countries concerned, it is turning to other ways of stretching the dollar and making use of agency expertise. One such is to make use of Intercountry Programme (ICP) funds when it sees an affordable and necessary role for the agencies. The relative growth of ICP projects in the Pacific is telling. Fully 50 per cent of the total number of projects handled by Unesco/SOPAC, and well over that in their dollar value, are regional. ICP projects in the Pacific sub-region are

in fact UNDP's largest sub-regional programme and ICP funds are greater than all Country Programmes combined. Another strategy is to make use of sub-contracts to regional research institutions (e.g. University of the South Pacific, South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) and to 'jobbing' - i.e. using fee contracts as a means of getting around the obstacle of standard costs. Unesco is currently executing two large projects in this manner and others are expected to follow.

Two problems are attendant on these two strategies. The first is that individual small island states tend to resist regional solutions to national education problems, in part because of traditional rivalries between island nations, and in part because national educational reform in such states, as elsewhere, is an intensely local enterprise, invested as it is with the soul and identity of the people it is to serve. Tonga, for example, does not want the solutions of Samoa or the Solomons thrust at it.

The second problem is the general dearth of acceptable regional research institutions. Either they lack the depth of technical and administrative expertise to execute technical assistance projects at a significantly reduced cost, or for one reason or another, they are not politically acceptable. Moreover, there is the feeling - justified or not - that if 'one gets what one pays for', cheaper manpower may go hand in glove with lower quality.

Isolation

The isolation of the small island states in the region plays a negative role on the multilateral agency side as well. Being situated further from the Pacific region than from any other, Unesco and its sister agencies are more cut off from the very problems they seek to alleviate. Less is known outside the region about small island states and their problems than about the countries of Asia and Africa. They are visited far less frequently by staff specialists not only from Headquarters but even from the Regional Office in Bangkok which nominally covers Asia and the Pacific. Even regional projects managed

from Bangkok which are intended to serve both sub-regions frequently have very little interaction with the other small islands of the Pacific.

A glance at the activities planned for the UNDP/Unesco network known as the Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development, APEID for short, is sufficient to see that a tiny fraction of the project's annual budget is spent on the small states (Papua New Guinea, an exception, has a population of 3.5 million and hence does not count as a small island state). APEID puts out a great many publications which ostensibly cover Asia and the Pacific but it is rare to find one that concerns the smaller islands of the sub-region.

The major causes cited include the undeniable difficulty in obtaining case study material and answers to requests for information, as well as the time and money for first hand investigations. Indeed, leaving aside slow answers, correspondence time is a significant problem in its own right. It takes nearly one month for a letter posted from Unesco to reach Apia. If one adds to that the delays caused by the need for prior consultations, visas and the like, before a letter can be despatched, the temptation is understandably strong to pass over the Pacific if one wants to issue a publication without unreasonable delay. But why not publish more within the Pacific? A question of scale again: print runs are too small for economical publishing.

Dependence

A third major characteristic of small nation states is that of dependence. The level of bilateral assistance, particularly from Australia and New Zealand, to educational reform projects in the small island states of the Pacific is often so great that it is often very difficult for other agencies, particularly multilaterals, to obtain a useful and uncontested entry point in the field of education in these states. One reason for this is that those agencies already operating there often defend the precedence of their prior claims over late arrivals with what is tantamount to zealous protectiveness.

A dog-in-the-manger attitude also tends to occur. In 1981, for example, Unesco commenced operations on a ten-country regional vocational curriculum project. The initial plan was to cover four subject areas, one of which was agricultural education. This elective was, however, dropped because a bilateral agency had stated a prior claim to it. Today, five years later, nothing has been done in this field and Unesco has once again been approached to pick up this activity.

One of the penalties of a high degree of dependence on external assistance is that individual countries know that dependence is a two-way street. True, a country like Tonga or Western Samoa receives over 30 per cent of its income in the form of overseas aid and to this extent, because they could not exist without it, their degree of dependence is high. But the agencies, both multilateral and bilateral, exist to provide assistance. Aid, so to speak, is their stock in trade and a high market demand for their services is seen as evidence of both their skills and, more especially, their *raison d'être*. Indeed one might well wonder what would happen were the small Pacific state really to threaten aid agencies with self-reliance, a goal widely espoused. In the existing situation, competition among agencies runs high. Because individual countries know this very well, many of them succumb to the temptation to encourage and hold out for the highest bidder. The stakes can be high in terms of opportunity costs and sometimes everyone comes out a loser.

One common occurrence is the difficulty of finding funding for some of the smaller projects not covered by the bilateral agencies which fund the lion's share of educational reform projects. What appear to be loose ends are in fact occasionally of vital importance to the impact of a bilaterally-funded initiative. An example might be the publication of instructional materials developed but not printed under bilateral aid. UNDP would be reluctant to pick up these crumbs from the table of the bilateral agencies especially if not initially involved in the development of the materials in the first instance.

Mismatched solutions

International missions, whether they come to the developing countries to conduct sectoral studies of the type often carried out by the

World Bank, or are attempting to identify and prepare externally-funded projects, tend to fall prey to using the yardstick of the intellectual baggage they brought with them to assess the needs of small island states. This baggage is shaped by two factors: their own large, home-country socio-economic backgrounds; and the classic development characteristics of the main recipients of technical assistance provided by the UN, from projects where these experts have gained their past professional experience. The conclusions they reach and the recommendations they make tend to be derived from typically western, large-country models, and these paradigms they attempt to overlay on small island states.

Many planners and educators from small Pacific islands go along with these proposals more or less unquestioningly. Sometimes, of course, they lack the technical background to probe some of the planning assumptions. But many have done their postgraduate studies in developed countries and feel relatively comfortable with the strategies proposed and even the methods of work.

Two typically mismatched solutions to educational problems in small island nations are the setting up of the classic planning unit and the establishment, or expansion, of technical institutes. The former is predicated on the assumption that enough is or can be known about the future of these small island economies and their human resource requirements to extrapolate reliable educational targets from them. Most of their exports are limited to a very small number of primary sector commodities – copra, sugar and the like – and apart from being in direct competition with dozens of other countries all trying to sell the same thing, they are subject to wild market fluctuations over which they have no control. In addition there are land tenure problems, unskilled, labour intensive economies and the like, and the task of the planner becomes increasingly an exercise in tea-leaf reading.

As for the technical education institutions in small states one need go no further than recall Phillip Foster's compelling criticism of unacceptably high per capita fixed and recurrent costs, inappropriate curricula, and the tendency for these institutions to want to graduate to the status of a polytechnic, and a steely resistance to change. But

where the Pacific states are concerned, the negative aspects accumulate. Not only are they not articulated to real manpower requirements for the reasons described above; once set in motion, these 'machines infernales' seem to be unstoppable and crank out technicians with exaggeratedly high notions of their own worth, for an insufficient number of jobs, with skills learned on machinery that seems to exist only at the technical college in question, little if any ability to be retrained, and a perverse disinclination to work anywhere but in the major urban centres.

If these familiar examples of criticism can be justifiably laid at the feet of the advisers which, say, Unesco hires, a corresponding one exists on the funding agency side. UNDP has a classification of technical assistance projects to which all are assigned at the preparation state. Among the most common where education - and therefore Unesco - is concerned is what is known as institutional capacity building. The expression implies the desirability not to say need for a certain critical mass and along with it a level of specialisation. Hence, the intention is clear: institutions should be built willy nilly, regardless of whether they are appropriate to the situation.

It is conceded that something resembling an institution is probably appropriate to take on the task of planning and managing occupational skills development. But is it scarcely likely that a ministry composed of twelve professionals, eight of whom are inspectors, will be able to undertake the planning activity, and develop the appropriate stages for achieving the underlying goal, as usually expected of UNDP. Those at the top of the ministry are, and must remain, polyvalent and essentially reactive. Conversely they cannot afford the luxury of locking themselves away, totally absorbed in a single project. The result of this situation is that UNDP has been reluctant in the past to move away from long standing views on acceptable input levels for programming purposes and from its principles in respect of resource management.

Planning and management of the ambiguous

A high tolerance for ambiguity is an unwritten requirement that figures in the job description of anyone working in development

assistance. Where small Pacific islands are concerned, few would contest that it reaches new unsuspected heights. Powerful intervening variables exist but cannot be adequately controlled for predictive purposes. A few examples include geopolitics (e.g. the recent flurry of USA activity following the Kiribati signing of the fishing rights treaty with the Soviet Union), shifting immigration policies which govern the number of Pacific Islanders who can work in the USA, New Zealand and Australia; shifting power blocks within the Pacific; and an uncertain world economy to which single or double crop economies are highly vulnerable.

Bilateral assistance seems to be less troubled by this ambiguity than multilateral technical assistance perhaps because it is traditionally accepted as an arm of foreign policy which makes assumptions or has goals directly related to these intervening variables. Neither, however, is completely spared the frequent uncertainty about precisely what governments would like to maximise. The absence of any kind of plan, even in someone's mind, is not uncommon. In any case, since small Pacific states lack planners, they usually hire them. Each one has an axe to grind and each claims to marry unassailable logic with cost-effectiveness. In one Pacific small island state no less than six assessment surveys were made, at government request, in respect to future planning for a national training institution. Most were carefully done, contained points for reflection, and suggested lines of action. In the event, not one was acted upon.

The result is that agencies, both multilateral and bilateral, career about, sometimes overlapping, occasionally re-doing work that has been done, with a result that may be more costly than it should have been and may be even worse than no action at all. Many doctors may be called in on the case but how many can materially gather about the patient and still work effectively? Overstepping the limit at the least delays, the operation may even kill the patient. To be fair, there is a general understanding of this dilemma and efforts, be they fumbling, are currently being made to overcome it. That they have not been crowned with more success may be more than a matter of competing political or institutional goals.

Sometimes there would appear to be a deliberate policy of divide and rule. In any event, it is not at all uncommon for two, or even more, agencies to be requested to do the same job at the same time. Analogous to airlines overbooking to ensure the plane is full? No: both agencies frequently are asked and agree to provide the services. Is one called off? Not necessarily. A recent embarrassing example known to the author was one where two consultants were provided by Unesco and ILO to do the same job at the same time (needs assessment of a technical institute). Each arrived, unbeknown to the other, at the same time. Fortunately, it was agreed to do the job jointly, but embarrassment and a sense of frustration were experienced on all sides, beyond the confines of the particular project.

Counterpart contributions, recurrent costs and other myths

Technical assistance, as the old saying goes, is the process by which an internationally recruited specialist is supposed to transfer his/her skills and knowledge to a national within a recognised period of time, thereby rendering continued in-country presence redundant. In addition, technical assistance is supposed to respond to a national request which reflects a national need and focuses on national priorities. Nationals, though they go by the unflattering term of counterparts, are thus the theoretical hub of the whole operation. But what happens when there simply are not enough, as is often the case in small states? For the truth is that the demand for counterparts by aid agencies has far exceeded the supply-side capacity to deliver. The small Pacific Island states cannot keep up with the orders.

In one such state some years ago, an analysis of the dilemma of providing counterparts for all externally-funded education projects was carried out by the Central Planning Office. It was found that some 65 per cent of the upper third of the entire civil service - not just in the education sector - would have had to down tools and be reassigned to aid projects to meet the collective requirements of the education sector alone.

In those rare cases when one is actually identified and assigned to a given project, he/she will probably have many other simultaneous responsibilities - official, traditional, and personal - and hence not be able to absorb all the so-called wisdom being offered by the visiting specialist. This notwithstanding, the majority of the aid agencies continue to subscribe to the traditional technical assistance philosophy and accordingly register surprise when counterparts are not forthcoming. More unfortunately, projects continue to be designed along the lines of the traditional technical assistance model. It is proving difficult to respond to the call for new strategies - strategies that make it possible for the multilaterals to work more with NGOs and voluntary organisations where counterparts often exist in fair supply.

The counterpart myth does not stand alone. Most technical assistance involves human resource development which entails increased expenditure by government. Someone with upgraded skills almost always sees him/herself as being a more valuable resource to the education system and having probably been underpaid before anyway, feels more than justified in laying claim to a new or better position. Higher mathematics is scarcely necessary to see at a glance that if the government is already having trouble with the existing education budget, then it is unlikely it will regard proposals for increasing the expenditure with equanimity: or will it? In fact such proposals are forthcoming, and place increasing pressure on recurrent costs. The bilaterals have long accepted this situation, but multilaterals usually balk at requests from small island states for capacity-building projects. In practice, however, requests are very rarely rejected, by either UNDP or Unesco on the grounds that the recipient country cannot furnish incontrovertible evidence of its capacity to pay recurrent costs. Questions are asked; answers are given; and the matter is usually investigated no further. Bank-funded projects are a different matter but they are something less than popular in Pacific small island states.

A third myth is that projects really can be conceived of as building blocks to development provided they are constructed in

such a way as to have clear entry and exit points. Highly prized therefore, are operationally formulated objectives based on a liberal use of performance measures, the theory of accountability, and the necessity of hard-nosed, objective (i.e. external) project evaluation. UNDP, to lend weight to this belief, has recently instituted something known as the checklist matrix by which one verifies the validity of one's assumptions made in respect to the project's goals and strategy for achieving them. The intention is that project designers are supposed to subject all the major planning assumptions to a merciless scrutiny to ensure they satisfy certain means-ends criteria.

Given the aforementioned planning ambiguity surrounding small island states, the theoretically well-designed project intended to articulate efficiently with a larger strategy appears increasingly as an exercise which has little or nothing to do with realistic development objectives. Rather, its overriding purpose seems to aim at satisfying the controller's requirements to release the funds. Accountability, it must be recognised, is an important and necessary issue and expecting that technical assistance be provided by multilateral agencies without it would be naive. At the same time its rationale should in no way become synonymous with that of technical assistance for development: two very different sets of purposes are being served.

Projects then do not lend themselves to being building blocks for development, because the outputs of one rarely if ever serve as the inputs for the next. But they seem to accomplish something else, something equally valuable, something which is ultimately serendipitous: they create and, with each succeeding project, reinforce the national capacity to exercise enlightened criticism of what is good and bad for the welfare of a country. Because Pacific projects are, on the whole, small, their lives tend to be brief. Opportunities to re-examine planning assumptions are more frequent than those in larger countries, and it is these that constitute the stone against which the Pacific States are honing their critical faculties.

Promise for the future

The combination of the above factors, unalleviated, would leave an impression that the multilaterals can accomplish nothing for the small

island states of the Pacific. On the contrary, there is hope. It lies in the direction of a less wooden, more understanding approach to co-operation on the part of the donors and an increased appreciation on the part of the recipient that scarce resources wasted are scarce resources deprived from the needy, if not in the Pacific, then elsewhere. Two projects which depart radically from the traditional multilateral way of doing things are considered briefly to illustrate this. It is hoped that they will convey an image of opportunity. While one concerns pre-vocational curriculum development and the other planning, in fact they could have focused on any sub-sector issue. Both are nominally regional; each is essentially national.

To gain access to UNDP-ICP funds and satisfy individual small Pacific states that their national requirements were being met, a regional pre-vocational curriculum project was set up using an unconventional model. Sub-contracted to USP in an effort to reduce costs (it is not bound by UN standard cost procedures) and to reinforce regional research institutions, the project has one full-time staff member, the Project Co-ordinator. His task is to oversee the setting up of a group of national curriculum development units established for the purposes of the project. These units, while operating within the overall framework of the project, are staffed solely by nationals. At regular periods, they are assisted by the services of consultants who are staff members of USP's Institute of Education.

The project determines the levels (Forms I to V) and subject areas for which it was designed to provide assistance. Individual governments, however, are left to decide for which classes each wishes to develop curriculum and in which fields. The project is thus a regional framework for a network of nevertheless essentially national activities. Freed from the bonds of externally imposed conformity, individual curriculum development units are not only gratifyingly enthusiastic about achieving their self-appointed goals but showing an unexpected willingness to seek regional ties on their own.

It is this latter tendency that has prompted the Co-ordinator to hold periodic regional meetings of staff from the various curriculum

units involved to allow them to compare notes, exchange ideas and even elect to share certain materials. The Co-ordinator, for his part, continues to treat each unit's problems separately and tries to respond with answers appropriate to the special national characteristics of each situation. The project is, in the foregoing respects, a radical departure from the previous Unesco curriculum project which, though considerably more ambitious, was more conservative in its approach to developing national competencies.

The second project, not yet operational, concerns the provision of training in planning and management to inspectors, headteachers and school principals in the Pacific islands. It is similar to the preceding project in that it too seeks to provide for national needs within a regional framework and accordingly will be keeping a very low profile. However, in addition, this one also seeks to lessen the effects of three other problems as well, namely: administrative delays in fielding requested inputs; insisting on a certain critical mass (of interest, national staff, money) as a precondition to mounting a project; and providing all instructions on a standardised basis, i.e. in English and following a norm-referenced syllabus.

The project employs a strategy which takes account of two factors widely encountered in the Pacific islands. One is the mercurial nature of the staffing and programming situation. If the project is to be of any real service, a strategy of rapid intervention must be built into it. This approach is, among other things, intended to minimise in-country expatriate presence which is sometimes unproductive and can be oppressive, even in its most innocent manifestations. Such an approach also downplays capacity building in favour of polyvalence.

The second strategy is that the level of English of the target groups, that is to say, inspectors and headteachers - is on the whole too low to benefit from regional training. For the project to be effective therefore, the Co-ordinator will identify bilingual nationals - those versed in the vernacular language as well as English. Thus two categories of personnel will receive their training in English in essentially regional settings. They in turn will then be hired as national consultants by the project to mount national/vernacular

language workshops, using the international staff to backstop them as and where may be necessary and appropriate.

A parting thought

The experience of Unesco/SOPAC is only two years old so a conclusion would be both premature and misleading. As more people become interested in the problem of micro-planning and more especially of the reform of education in the small island states of the Pacific, the timid and tentative steps taken today will be transformed to the purposeful stride of people who know what they want and how they propose to obtain it. The Commonwealth Secretariat and its worldwide network of specialists piloted the test vehicle; let us hope that those of us who joined their efforts later can bring something to the business of fine-tuning it.

14 Aid for Education

Rudolph Goodridge and Bevis Peters

The issue of educational aid to small nation states in the Commonwealth is considered by Rudolph Goodridge and Bevis Peters. Attention is concentrated on some of the advantages derived from educational aid, the problems which are inherent in current aid programmes and processes, and ways by which aid could have a more meaningful part to play in the long-term development of education in small states. In particular it is suggested that support is needed to assist small states develop their own long-term research, planning and policy development capabilities.

The context

There is considerable variation in the educational problems and needs of small states. Whilst united in 'smallness' it cannot be assumed that their educational requirements are identical. There is a great variability in their patterns of educational provision. Some countries have compulsory primary education; others have low primary school enrolments. Some small states have a high transition rate from primary to secondary schools while for others the rate is very low. The same is true of those proceeding to tertiary education.

There are considerable differences too in the percentage of government expenditure devoted to education. As for most education

systems the bulk of expenditure goes on teachers' salaries, but the cost of general administration tends to be relatively high, often taking second place in the educational budget. In some small countries such as the Solomon Islands and Brunei, the second highest item of educational expenditure is on scholarships. These two states spend 11.1 per cent and 16.7 per cent respectively on scholarship awards.

There is also considerable diversity in the manner in which government expenditure is allocated between the different levels of the educational system. For example, expenditure on primary education takes 30 per cent of the educational budget in Malta and 48 per cent in Gambia. At the secondary level the percentage varies from 12 per cent in the Solomon Islands to over 44 per cent in Brunei, while at the tertiary level the figure ranges from 6.1 per cent in Gambia to 21 per cent in Malta.

The factors briefly outlined above indicate that the external aid small states are likely to seek for their education systems will vary considerably. Each nation develops its own list of priorities for which assistance is sought. Nevertheless, despite this variability one common characteristic is that all these countries put a high priority on education. They, like other societies, seek to make the education they offer more relevant and responsive to their socio-economic development needs and national priorities, but the constraint which their size imposes often makes their response more difficult. They are often unable to meet challenges because of their limited resources and a lack of trained manpower, a problem which is especially marked in the field of technical and vocational education. Further when they seek external assistance they have the additional challenge that the aid offered, both in terms of materials and personnel, is not always that which is most relevant to their long term development needs. This is particularly difficult since most of the materials which are offered in an aid package are not usually devised with the particular needs of small nation states in mind, and the personnel who come out to assist often have little or no experience of working in these types of societies. As a result they often end up treating small states as if they were merely large states, writ small.

Most small nations tend to have a very limited economic base and a small population. This makes it difficult to provide locally a full range of educational opportunities and services which may be needed in order fully to develop their human resources and manpower requirements. In turn this is likely to make small states highly dependent on outside sources for educational assistance with the problems which are likely to accompany this dependency. Great care is necessary to ensure that any educational project for which aid is being sought will be cost-effective. While the capital cost of a project might be met from an external source the recurrent cost has to be found locally. Therefore in any educational project attention must be focused not only on the size of the external aid packet but also on the long term financial commitment which this is likely to have on the recurrent budget of the country.

Geographic dispersion, especially in the case of archipelagic nations, together with relative isolation, provides major challenges for small countries in their attempt to meet local educational needs. This in turn is likely to increase the tendency of small states to seek external assistance, especially if efforts to meet isolated learners utilise modern communication technology.

The fact that these nations are so small and yet enjoy political independence is likely to increase the desire of larger nations to seek a diplomatic quid pro quo for any help that they might offer. This increases their vulnerability to external forces and the agencies of the more powerful nation states, as well as large international organisations.

Some positive aspects of educational aid

Small states have undoubtedly benefited from the use of external assistance in a number of important ways. Through the use of capital grants and loans, countries have been able to promote increased access to education and training opportunities, a development priority. Assistance has helped to finance the construction and

refurbishment of schools and other training institutions, and to equip them with educational technology and materials; critical inputs in enhancing the quality of the teaching-learning process.

It is also true that small states have benefited significantly from fellowship and scholarship schemes, which allow their nationals to study abroad, within or beyond their region, for short-term or extended periods. This helps reduce the need to build expensive, specialised training facilities in each country. Where such schemes are pursued in regional, sub-regional or selected national institutions located in small states, the resource benefits derived can be a key source of support for further indigenous institutional development and expansion.

Small states, by availing themselves of technical assistance in its various forms (consultants, advisers, specialist teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum developers and so on), are also able to pursue needed reforms in their educational systems. Technical assistance, when used wisely and prudently, can also be of much benefit in the development and improvement of administrative structures and procedures. Such initiatives in turn can have the benefit of increasing efficiency and improving cost-effectiveness.

Another area in which aid has offered much benefit is as an instrument of regional integration and collaboration. A case in point is the UWI/USAID Primary Education Project in the Caribbean. Formal agreements were entered into in 1979 by the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and USAID to design and implement a project on a regional scale.

Curriculum reforms and guides, teaching aids and materials development, training of teachers and educational managers, and improved physical facilities, were some of the key objectives in this collaborative effort. It is to the credit of all the actors involved in this process that the project was deemed a major success (Project Evaluation Report: 1985). Perhaps in the future this is the kind of model that small countries will need to consider in the interest of maximising the potential benefits of external aid from a variety of aid

sources. The point made in the report of the Commonwealth Experts Meeting in Mauritius in November 1985 about the importance of promoting regional co-operation as one means of overcoming the constraints of smallness is worth underlining here:

Regional co-operation in provision of education services offers possibilities of establishing courses closer to home when the domestic system on its own is not sufficiently large to justify course provision, or the establishment of services like examinations. Many regional co-operation arrangements are already being established in different parts of the Commonwealth, involving shared universities and other institutions, examinations and assessment bodies, consultative organisations and the like.¹

Problems

It is, however, true to say that despite the significant benefits to education that can be attributed to aid, the process is not without its problems. One of the recurring concerns is the apparent absence of co-ordinated frameworks for channelling aid within countries, among countries and among aid agencies. Judging from the experience of small states, this problem is most noticeable in the area of non-formal education and training.

In the Caribbean region, for example, it is not unusual to find at any one period of time, within any country, several training activities, catering to a clientele with essentially the same training needs and aspirations. These activities may be found operating with different values, under different local, regional, sub-regional or extra-regional sponsorship, but aiming to achieve the same basic purposes. Concern over this general state of affairs has been raised by both aid donors and recipients, but until all actors involved in the planning and implementation of aid projects are prepared to give it the urgent attention it requires, the resource wastage and duplication of effort

which have been well documented are likely to continue in the future.

Another problem area relates to the way in which aid projects are negotiated and managed. Aid agency administrative policies, their procedures and accountability mechanisms can pose major obstacles to an effective aid process. One way in which this has been clearly manifested is in the case where the recipient country is expected to make a local contribution (in-kind costs) towards the total cost of an aid package. This local contribution can at times be sufficiently large to create an added burden on the already constrained resources of small states. The need for a review of this requirement is particularly acute, especially in light of the fact that the reason for requesting aid in the first place was to ease the burden of the costs borne by the country.

Closely related are the conditions tied to aid. One such condition is the requirement that a stipulated proportion of the total value of capital grants - up to 90 per cent in some cases, must be spent in the home country of the donor agency. Such rigid stipulations have been known not only to make the real value of aid to the host country minimal, but it is also not unusual to find that the materials, equipment and supplies bought from outside are either inappropriate to local environmental conditions, or relatively costly to maintain.

Another pertinent point is that there is an undue fixation with the operational or programmatic aspects of educational systems. Aid projects seem, for the most part, to have ignored that level of the system where important strategic policy decisions are formulated. This is not meant to imply that external advisors and experts should be involved in, or should be perceived to be influencing, policy level decisions and priorities. Rather it is that the aid process should be of sufficient flexibility to allow movement beyond the level of operational and technical concerns, to permit small states to use these resources more strategically, and generally to allow them much wider scope whereby they can address some of the more fundamental problems facing their education systems.

Needs

In considering the prospects of aid for education to small states, it is important to view aid not only in terms of its amount, adequacy and appropriateness to educational programmes, methods and operations, but also to its impact on, and the extent to which it enables small states to develop their capacity to address some of the more fundamental concerns in education and educational development. Inquiry, by small states themselves, into genuine and fundamental questions about the role of education, its mission, and the strategies necessary to bring about directed change is vital to their own self-reliance. It is on this basis that the long-term viability of their education systems rests.

Further, aid projects will need to be judged as to how they facilitate wider involvement of the various constituencies who give effect to, or are affected by the educational development process – policy-makers, administrators, teachers, students, parents, special interest organisations and so on. These key actors must not only be afforded the opportunity to give full expression as to where they think their education systems should be going in the future; they must also be strategically placed within the education decision-making process so as to give wider legitimacy to the initiatives proposed and to their implementation.

These are the elements of a strategic planning process; a decision-making process which when applied to social organisations, such as education, requires the organisation to look beyond its internal environment (programmes and operations) and to focus as well on the social, political and economic forces external to it, and which influence its development and growth. It also permits the organisation to reassess its own strengths and opportunities as it seeks to bring about planned changes. This is the kind of background and orientation against which the future qualitative contributions of aid should be judged.

Aid will also have to be judged on the extent to which it has helped small states advance from a condition of dependence to one of more independence. There is a strong case for a greater part of aid to be diverted from the functional or operational levels of education systems, and to be allocated towards the development and/or strengthening of educational decision-making processes and systems. Through such an approach, small states will then be able to develop their own capacity for strategic planning, as well as the tools necessary to diagnose their own problems, and to design and implement strategies which are truly their own.

The promotion of greater interdependence of small states will also require the allocation of more aid resources for the development of more effective collaborative processes and mechanisms. In this regard, what may be needed is an approach that permits a number of aid organisations to pool resources to attack interrelated problems faced by small states. There is certainly a case here for resources resulting from bilateral arrangements to be pooled. There is also a case for the pooling of personnel resources from sub-regions to provide technical assistance. Further, agencies must begin to make a special effort to share the results of education surveys, findings of special project missions, of needs assessment studies and so on with member states of a particular region. For it is by such approaches that the leadership of education systems can develop a greater appreciation of needs, issues and responses.

A need is also seen for a greater proportion of aid to education to be more flexible, diversified and long-term in nature. This will not only require modifications in the conception of aid projects and how they are managed, but also arrangements and procedures for the commencement and termination of projects will have to be reassessed. Administrative and financial mechanisms to ensure continuity of projects in small states - where these prove warranted - will need to be devised. And built-in processes for wider regional diffusion of the results of aid projects must be viewed as essential components of such projects.

Beyond this, aid giving and receiving should be viewed for what it is - a process - rather than a mechanistic, static tool for dispensing funds, materials and personnel. The aid process should be seen as a dynamic one operating in partnership with, and integrated where possible with, the development processes of small countries. It must be seen as a process in which stronger collaborative relationships among aid agencies themselves is required if small countries are to exploit fully the opportunities available to them.

More importantly, it must be viewed as a process through which small states can significantly overcome their constraints of small size and move towards the ultimate aim of aid - which, it is agreed, is to reduce their dependence on external assistance.

Conclusion

Education is a continuous life-long activity. It follows that education must be perceived as a pervasive factor in the development process and well integrated, horizontally and vertically, into all development efforts. Moreover, whatever is done in the name of development, the ultimate aim should be to promote self-reliance, reduce dependence and decrease the vulnerability of individuals, families and the country as a whole.

The quality of education in small developing states should be seen as important as matters of quantity and scale. It is necessary to explore a variety of learning methods, to carry out experimentation and research in techniques and methods of educational reform, and to promote their widest diffusion where and when it is proven necessary. These are some of the priority areas to which aid agencies must give their attention.

Finally, education decision-makers and managers in small states must acknowledge that reforms imposed from the top have a poor record. What needs to be promoted, therefore, is wider popular participation in the study of educational issues and in the planning of reforms. The development and use of local and regional expertise and leadership in the management of educational systems is of critical

importance in this regard. The training of education leaders and managers to develop a sound knowledge and the skills to perform the multifaceted roles necessary to perform in the milieu of small states is therefore deserving of the highest attention.

Considered in this context, it follows that small states must become more self-reliant and less dependent on others in designing their own development plans, in devising planning strategies, and in the development and use of appropriate indigenous processes, methods, technologies and local expertise. They must also have the capacity to evolve, test and implement their own concepts and educational reforms. The area of vocational and technical education is a prime candidate here. The ability of small states of the Commonwealth to evolve their own concept of institutional development must be encouraged and nurtured. So too is the need for assisting them in devising the kind of co-operative relationships and arrangements that will foster interdependence.

This then is the framework that should inform the future orientation of aid, its focus, and its management processes. If educational aid is to impact beneficially on educational development in small countries aid agencies, as well as the states receiving aid, must begin to address these challenges jointly.

Reference

- 1 Commonwealth Secretariat (1986), *Educational Development: The Small States of the Commonwealth*, Report of a Pan-Commonwealth Experts Meeting, Mauritius 1985 (p.5)

Appendix A The Small States of the Commonwealth

I The independent countries of the Commonwealth with a population of less than two million

State	Population	Land Area (sq kms)	GNP per capita (US\$-1990)	Type
1 Lesotho	1,771,000	30,355	470	C
2 Trinidad and Tobago	1,283,000	5,128	3,470	A
3 Botswana	1,254,000	581,730	2,040	C
4 Mauritius	1,074,000	1,865	2,250	A
5 The Gambia	875,000	11,295	260	B
6 Guyana	798,000	214,969	370	B
7 Swaziland	789,000	17,303	820	C
8 Cyprus	701,000	9,251	8,040	A
9 Malta	353,000	316	6,630	A
10 Solomon Islands	324,000	28,446	580	AA
11 Barbados	257,000	431	6,540	A
12 Brunei Darussalam	256,000	5,765	14,120	B
13 Bahamas	253,000	13,880	11,510	AA
14 Maldives	218,000	280	440	AA
15 Belize	189,000	22,963	1,970	B

16	Western Samoa	165,000	2,842	730	A
17	Vanuatu	157,000	11,880	1,060	AA
18	St Lucia	150,000	616	1,900	A
19	St Vincent and the Grenadines	114,000	388	1,610	AA
20	Tonga	99,000	750	1,010	AA
21	Grenada	94,000	344	2,120	A
22	Dominica	82,000	751	1,940	A
23	Antigua and Barbuda	79,000	441	4,600	A
24	Kiribati	70,000	751	760	AA
25	Seychelles	68,000	280	4,670	AA
26	St Kitts and Nevis	40,000	360	3,330	A
27	Nauru	8,000	21	n.a.	A
28	Tuvalu	8,000	28	n.a.	AA

Source: *Basic Statistical Data on Selected Countries (with population of less than 5 million)*
Commonwealth Secretariat 1992

Key

n.a. not available

A island state

AA archipelago state

B littoral state - coastal states on a larger land mass

C landlocked state

**II Associated states and dependent territories of the Commonwealth
with a population of less than two million**

Territory	Status	Population	Land area (sq kms)	Type
1 Bermuda	Dependency (UK)	58,616(1988)	53	A
2 Gibraltar	Dependency (UK)	28,719(1981)	6	B
3 Cook Islands	Associated State (NZ)	20,000(1990)	234	AA
4 Cayman Island	Dependency (UK)	27,000(1990 est)	259	AA
5 British Virgin Islands	Dependency (UK)	13,000(1987)	153	AA
6 Montserrat	Dependency (UK)	10,000(1990)	102	A
7 Turks and Caicos	Dependency (UK)	13,000(1990 est)	499	AA
8 Anguilla	Dependency (UK)	7,000(1984)	91	A
9 St Helena*	Dependency (UK)	5,664(1987)	122	A
10 Niue	Associated State (NZ)	2,145(1989)	259	A
11 Christmas Island	External Territory (Australia)	1,230(1989)	135	A
12 Norfolk Island	External Territory (Australia)	1,977(1986)	35	A

13	Falkland Islands	Dependency (UK)	1,916(1986)	12,173	AA .
14	Tokelau	Territory Overseas (NZ)	1,690(1980)	10	AA
15	Cocos Island	External Territory (Australia)	665(1988)	14	A
16	Pitcairn	Dependency (UK)	52(1988)	4.5	A

Source: *The Commonwealth Yearbook 1990*

Key

* St Helena has administrative responsibility for Ascension Island and Tristan de Cunha

A island territory

AA archipelago territory

B littoral territory

Appendix B Select Bibliography on Small States

General

Commonwealth Secretariat (1985) *Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society*, Report of a Commonwealth Consultative Group

Dommen, Edward (Ed) (1980) *Islands*, Pergamon

Dommen, Edward and Hein, Philippe (Eds) (1985) *States, Microstates and Islands*, Croom Helm

Selwyn, P (Ed) (1975) *Development Policy in Small Countries* Croom Helm

Shand, R. T (Ed) (1980) *The Island States of the Pacific and Indian Oceans: Anatomy of Development*, Monograph 23, Development Studies Centre, Australian National University

Education

Bamford, G N (1986) *Training the Majority. Guidelines for the Rural Pacific*, Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific

Bray, M (1987) *A Set of Training Modules on Educational Planning in Small Countries*, Unesco

Brock, Colin (1984) *Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Educational Development in Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged States*, Commonwealth Secretariat

Brock, Colin and Parker, Roy (1985) 'School and Community in Situations of Close Proximity', in Lillis, Kevin (Ed) *School and Community in Developing Countries*, Croom Helm

Carrington, L (1978) *Education and Development in the English-Speaking Caribbean: a Contemporary Survey*, UNDP/Unesco/ECLA

Commonwealth Foundation (1982) *The Development of Appropriate Skills and Qualifications Required to Serve the Community in Small Island States*, Report of the Commonwealth Foundation Seminar, Barbados

Commonwealth Secretariat (1977) *Education and the Community, Partnership for Development*, Report of a Commonwealth Regional Seminar, Cook Islands

Commonwealth Secretariat (1981) *Rural Technology Workshop*, Report of a Commonwealth South Pacific Meeting, Fiji

Commonwealth Secretariat (1982) *Innovation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged States*, Report of a Commonwealth Regional Meeting, The Bahamas

Commonwealth Secretariat (1986) *Educational Development: The Small States of the Commonwealth*, Report of a Pan-Commonwealth Experts Meeting, Mauritius (November 1985)

Commonwealth Secretariat (1987) *The Supply, Training and Professional Support of Educational Personnel in Multi-Island Situations*, Report of a Pan-Commonwealth Meeting, Fiji

Conroy, J D (1982) 'Some Economic Aspects of Education in Very Small States' in *Essays on the Development Experience*, Monograph 17, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, Boroko, Papua New Guinea

Murray, Thomas and Postlethwaite, T N (Eds) (1984) *Schooling in the Pacific Islands*, Pergamon

Parker, Roy (1982) 'INSET in Small Island States' in Thompson, R (Ed), *The In-Service Education of Teachers in the Commonwealth*, Commonwealth Secretariat

Smawfield, David (1987) 'Form, Style and Extent of University Provision as Affecting Small Countries: a Typology' in Brock C. and Smawfield D (Eds) *International Academic Interchange and Co-operation in Higher Education*, Croom Helm

Appendix C List of contributors

(Note: the positions given below were those held by the contributors in 1987 when this book was first published.)

Editors

Kazim Bacchus Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Alberta, Canada.

Colin Brock Chairman, International Education Unit, The University of Hull, Britain.

Contributors

Charles Farrugia Professor and Head, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Malta.

Howard Fergus Senior Lecturer/Resident Tutor, University Centre, Montserrat.

Ranjit Goordyal Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Mauritius.

Rudolph Goodridge Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director of the Office of University Services, Cave Hill Campus, University of the West Indies, Barbados.

Peter Higginson Chief of Mission, Unesco Office for the Pacific States, Apia, Western Samoa.

Errol Miller Professor, Department of Teacher Education Development, Mona Campus, University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

Suresh Munbodh Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Mauritius.

Hilary Perraton Chief Project Officer, Education Programme,
Commonwealth Secretariat.

Bevis Peters Project Officer/Educational Planner, Office of
University Services, Cave Hill Campus, University of the West
Indies, Barbados.

Zotique Pragassen Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education and
Information, Seychelles.

John Rodhouse Director of Education, States of Jersey.

'Ana Taufē'ulungaki Educational Planner, Department of
Education, Tonga.

Konai Thaman Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities,
University of the South Pacific.

Kenneth Tsekoa Principal Secretary for Education, Ministry of
Education, Lesotho.

Prem Udagama Fellow, Institute of Education, University of the
South Pacific.

An introductory volume in a series of publications which focus on the impact of scale on the development of national education systems in the small states of the Commonwealth. Experienced educators and administrators from the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the South Pacific examine curriculum, training, post-secondary education, technical education, distance education, regional co-operation and aid for education in the context of the problems and challenges set by smallness of scale. The volume is edited by Kazim Bacchus, Director, Centre for International Education and Development, University of Alberta, Canada and Colin Brock, Chairman of the International Education Unit, University of Hull, Britain.

© Copyright 1987
Reprinted 1993

Printed and published by
The Commonwealth Secretariat

May be purchased from
Commonwealth Secretariat Publications
Marlborough House
London SW1Y 5HX

ISBN 0 85092 318 2

