INTRODUCTION

This directory is a revised edition of the 'Directory of Appropriate Technology Institutitons in the Commonwealth', which we published in 1977. The revisions consist mainly of a more discriminating selection of organisations, and an attempt to distinguish between those technologies which have and those which have not been widely adopted by their potential users. This edition concentrates more on specifically 'rural' technologies than did the earlier directory, and also has more detail about the work of the organisations included.

The distinction regarding the stage reached in the developement and adoption of a technology should make the directory more useful to its readers because it will be easier for them to judge who can best provide the sort of information they are seeking. This does not imply that prototype development is of no value, for experimental work is obviously essential in the development of any useful technology. However, most people in this field would, we think, agree that the acid test of a technology's appropriateness only comes when it has been actively used by ordinary people in the course of their everyday lives.

Some organisations which featured in the 1977 edition have been omitted from this one, either because we have no up-to-date information about their work, or because for one of several reasons we felt that their inclusion was inappropriate.

We have entitled this new edition a directory of 'rural' technology, because the word 'appropriate', which we used in the 1977 edition, has become even looser in its definition than it was three years ago. If there is any organisation engaged on 'inappropriate' technology, it is not going to admit to it! Furthermore, the specific interests of this division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, evidenced by the meetings on rural technology which it has organised in Tanzania, The Gambia, Nigeria and Zambia, are distinctly rural. At the same time, because this is a directory of organisations rather than of technologies, we have included organisations whose primary focus may not be rural, so long as part of their work is concerned with rural technology.

Some facts and figures on the compilation of the directory may be of interest. We started with an original list of 392 possible contacts. After initial research, we excluded 61 of these from the outset. We found out as much as we could about the work of the remaining 331 organisations, before we contacted any of them. 183 organisations were then sent individual letters asking for specific information, and another 133 were sent a printed circular letter asking for general information and a copy of their latest report. We already had good recent information about 15 organisations, so these were not contacted. We received replies from 154 organisations, 99 of which we have included in the directory. Entries for a further 23 organisations were compiled from the first-hand knowledge of our staff or of other people who had recently visited

the organisations, or from up-to-date reports.   Another 8
organisations were included although we had neither replies
nor recent information about their work, but we were sure that
they are in fact active and important in this field.   The source
of information is indicated in the text (see Explanatory Notes).

The length of an organisation's entry does not reflect the
scope of its work or our opinion of its importance.   Some
organisations in their replies described only those technologies which
were well proven by tests and widespread adoption;   other organisa-
tions described many products and processes, and did not make clear
the stage reached in work on them.   In many cases, we have included
all the information sent, but made clear that it may refer only to
experiments or untried prototypes.   Wherever possible we have made
clear the stage reached in developing a particular technology, but in
some cases this proved impossible.

We would like to thank all those who were kind enough to answer
our request for information;   we appreciate just how much time
often went into the replies.   We would also like to acknowledge
the particular assistance of Steve Bonnist and others at ITDG, London;
of Nicholas Jequier, who kindly allowed us access to the files of
OECD, Paris;   of Paul Sherlock, of OXFAM, who was most helpful on
AT work in the South Pacific region;   and of Dr. Azam Khan, of the
Commonwealth Science Council.   Antony Ellman and Tony Moody, of this
Division, provided both first-hand information and crucial advice
and criticism throughout the project.   Doris Ng not only typed
hundreds of letters and the directory itself, but also did much of the
indexing.   The directory was researched, compiled and written by
Bruce Mackay.

We also acknowledge the use we have made of the following
publications:-   "Appropriate Technology Directory", OECD, Paris,
1979;   and "Directory of Institutions and Individuals Active in
Environmentally-Sound and Socially-Appropriate Technology", UNEP &
Pergamon, Oxford, 1979.

Comments and suggestions on any aspect of the Directory will be
welcomed, and should be sent to:-

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