

Teaching Materials and Services

30 techniques for the care of leprosy patients; TLMI, London

Dr John Harris (formerly of Zaire, Africa) of the Leprosy Mission International, 80 Windmill Road, Brentford, Middlesex, London TW8 0QH, U.K., has produced a 30-page booklet describing 30 techniques for the care of leprosy patients. These range from history taking and skin examination through to reports and case-finding, covering virtually all the most important tasks relating to the care of leprosy patients. The format is based on a checklist of activities or tasks, against which the reader can put a tick when each one has been understood. Another column can be marked when the activity has been carried out and there is provision for checking by a supervisor. The book is very well printed and the format is easy to follow; it should be of great value and deserves wide circulation.

The Heiser Program now includes tuberculosis

The Heiser Program for Research in Leprosy, initiated at The New York Community Trust in 1974, has awarded over 125 postdoctoral fellowships and research grants over the past 17 years. The Program's scope has now been extended to include research in tuberculosis. A number of factors influenced this decision.

Tuberculosis, for long a major infectious disease in the developing world, causing three million deaths each year, is now sharply on the rise in the industrial nations. Furthermore, much of this disease is being caused by bacteria that are resistant to the commonly used antibiotics. It is now clear that the bacterial agents, *Mycobacterium leprae* and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, are closely related and have similar antigenic components. Thus, the search for effective means of immunization may well follow a common path for the two diseases. In the light of these developments, a number of laboratories concerned with leprosy research are concurrently engaged in work on tuberculosis, and it seems logical to foster this combined attack.

The Heiser Program will thus continue its support of leprosy research, and at the same time will accept applications for the support of research on tuberculosis.

The Awards

In accordance with Dr Heiser's stipulation at the time that he set up his fund in The New York Community Trust, the income is used not for treatment of patients but for basic laboratory research directed at a better understanding of the diseases and their bacterial agents. The ultimate aim is to find measures for the prevention and cure of these diseases that will serve to bring them under control. Two types of awards have been established to foster these objectives: (1) postdoctoral fellowships, designed to attract qualified and highly motivated young biomedical scientists to train in the relevant fields of research; and (2) small research grants that will support the training efforts of laboratories involved in research on leprosy and/or tuberculosis, or that will provide funds for the initiation of new research projects in the field.

Enquiries to Mrs Barbara M. Hugonnet, Director, Heiser Program for Research in Leprosy and Tuberculosis, 450 East 63 Street, New York, New York 10021, USA.

Bitter facts about drugs: PACE, Pakistan

This book takes a critical look at the range of drugs available in Pakistan. The author concludes that about 800 of the brand drugs (in an estimated 2000 dosage forms) widely sold in Pakistan are of questionable value or unsafe. Yet they account for 50% of the total drug sales in the country. The book includes a review of a large number of these drugs, classified in pharmacological groups with introductory pharmacological information on each group.

To promote its products, the pharmaceutical industry spends an estimated US\$455 annually per physician in Pakistan. The author draws attention to this fact and appeals to all parties involved to accept their responsibility for developing a national drug policy and ensuring the rational use of drugs.

The book is available at US\$25, including postage, from the distributor: PACE Distribution Company, 5th Floor, Press Trust House, I.I. Chundrigar Road, Karachi 74200, Pakistan.

Eye-care programmes in developing countries

Published by the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially-Sighted (NABP), this comprehensive resource manual deals with the principles, planning, implementation, and evaluation of eye-care programmes in developing countries. Based on the NABP's field experience worldwide, the book stresses the community-based, participatory approach.

Available in English at US\$30 to individuals in developed countries and NGOs and free of charge to individuals in developing countries at the following address: Director, Norwegian Church Aid, P.O. Box 52802, Nairobi, Kenya.

International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, *Newsletter*

The *IAPB News* is produced from the Secretariat, P.O.B. 191, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4YF, UK, and distributed free of charge. The December 1991 issue, No. 15, covers cataract operations; strategies for Ivermectin distribution through primary health care systems; eye care in the Cameroon; the prevention of blindness in Latin America; and the setting up of an international agency of opportunities and services by the American Academy of Ophthalmology to, '... link organisations and educational institutions which need professional personnel with health care professionals interested in providing education and clinical eye-care services to the international community'.

American Association for the Advancement of Science

The AAAS Sub-Saharan Africa Journal Distribution Programme provides subscriptions to more than 200 scientific, engineering, and other scholarly journals to some 175 university and research institute libraries in 35 countries. As a result of the AAAS effort, over 3500 subscriptions reach African institutions that do not have easy access to current literature.

The programme is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Recipient institutions are identified through in-country needs inventories, supplemented by advice from donor societies and from experts on research conditions in Africa.

Journal titles in the biomedical field included in the distribution programme are *JAMA*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *Pediatrics*, the journals of the American Society of Microbiology, American Physiological Society, etc.

The focus of the AAAS Journal Distribution Programme is beginning to expand. Because an important factor in the high price of overseas subscriptions is postage, new technologies are being explored, such as CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read-Only-Memory), that can supplement hard copy.

The *New England Journal of Medicine* may be made available on CD-ROM to a number of African libraries.

For further details on AAAS programmes, please contact Ms L. Levey, AAAS, 1333 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA.

Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI)

The need for a national apex organization in the voluntary health sector based on secular principles was strongly expressed in a meeting of leaders of voluntary hospitals and health care institutions of India in a meeting held in Bangalore in 1969. This started a process which culminated in the formation of Voluntary Health Association of India in 1974 based in Delhi with a clear mandate to promote the concept of community health in the country in order to correct the prevailing imbalances in the health care delivery system due to overemphasis on expensive hospital oriented curative health services. In its 15 years of existence VHAI has established links with more than 3000 health and development organizations spread all over the country.

VHAI works to promote social justice in the provision and distribution of health. Its major activities are aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- helping to create the atmosphere for building up a people's health movement through effective networking, lobbying, campaigning and public affairs related activities;

- helping in the evolution of low-cost, appropriate and people oriented health programme in harmony with the traditional knowledge and skills of the community;

- providing support services to community health programmes taken up by members and associates; and

- researching, training and educating on various aspects of (primary) health care.

For further details contact: Voluntary Health Association of India, 40, Institutional Area (Near Qutub Hotel), New Delhi 110 016. Ph.: 668071, 668072, 665018, 655871, 652953. Grams: 'VOLHEALTH'. Fax: 011-676377.

Intermediate Technology, UK, *Newsletter*

When Intermediate Technology (IT) was first registered in 1966 with a grant of £100, it was tiny: a band of 6 highly committed people with a network of supporters and contacts working out of very cramped offices in London. Fritz Schumacher, who by then was an internationally-renowned economist, advisor to governments, and economic advisor to the British coal industry, stuffed envelopes and licked stamps along with the rest of the IT staff in the early days.

After 25 years, the offices in Rugby, London, Peru, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh are still cramped, but now IT has nearly 200 people working for it world-wide, a budget of more than £6m each year, and more than 38,000 supporters in Britain alone.

The organization has worked in more than 60 countries in its first 25 years, and has learnt much about appropriate technologies and techniques from those communities.

Throughout its life, Intermediate Technology has initiated many new ideas, both in Britain and overseas. In Britain, Intermediate Technology helped initiate Local Enterprise Trusts—now called Local Enterprise Agencies—providing skills and knowledge to would-be small business people. In addition, the group has spawned a number of 'breakaway' groups specializing in specific fields of appropriate technology; for example IT Power, IT Transport and AHRTAG (Appropriate Health Resources and Technology Action Group).

After 25 years, the group has a number of wholly-owned subsidiaries which help with information and influencing work. IT Consultants markets the group's expertise and experience world-wide and IT Publications publishes a wide range of practical books on appropriate technology and development issues.

For further details write to: Intermediate Technology, Myson House, Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HT, U.K.