

Guidebook to Education in the Commonwealth

Commonwealth Secretariat



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Foreword

One of the strengths and defining characteristics of the Commonwealth is the sharing of experiences based on common values. All Commonwealth countries have committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and to providing Education for All (EFA). Despite the commonality underlying these global goals, there is great diversity – and innovation – in the initiatives designed to help meet them.

Even as Commonwealth countries increase their focus on achieving those goals, the difference in the rate of progress between countries is significant. It is recognised that, although a ‘one size fits all’ model is not the best approach, there are many excellent practices taking place that may readily apply to other countries – if the innovations are known and shared.

Accordingly, there is a need to identify the most successful initiatives, and share them with other Commonwealth countries. This will allow all countries to benefit from more innovation, particularly in improving quality, and in making education more relevant, participatory and inclusive.

This guidebook is intended, therefore, to provide Commonwealth governments and their partners with a platform to share their particular expertise, and as resource for other countries to use when considering introducing a particular education initiative.

Specifically, the guidebook:

- Reports on a range of good initiatives which have improved teaching and learning in education in a cross-section of Commonwealth countries;
- Provides a practical resource to inform and advocate for greater attention to education quality and inclusion across all countries; and
- Showcases excellent education projects, programmes and activities across the Commonwealth.

Although designed primarily as a government-to-government resource, the document also contains information about solutions to educational challenges found by the non-government sector.

Two immediate outcomes of this sharing of successful initiatives will be to offer policy-makers a wider range of contextualised examples of solutions to particular educational challenges and to provide a contact point for decision-makers from other countries when seeking to gain more detailed information.

It is hoped that the longer-term impact of this resource will be the continued sharing of best practices and experiences within and across regions.

I commend this guidebook to you and trust that you will use it to contribute to a better alignment of education practice and policy goals, through evidence-based educational strategies, and greater innovation across those strategies.

Ransford Smith

Deputy Secretary-General
Commonwealth Secretariat

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Abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|---------|--|
| A-Level | Advanced Level examination |
| AEDI | Australian Early Development Index |
| CAPE | Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination |
| CEE | Common Entrance Examination |
| CMEC | Council of Ministers of Education, Canada |
| CSEC | Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate |
| CXC | Caribbean Examinations Council |
| DBE | Department of Basic Education (South Africa) |
| EFA | Education for All |
| GCE | General Certificate of Education |
| GCSE | General Certificate of Secondary Education |
| ICT | information and communication technology/ies |
| IGCSE | International General Certificate of Secondary Education |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| NAPLAN | National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (Australia) |
| NEA | National Education Agreement (Australia) |
| NGOs | non-governmental organisations |
| NTRC | National Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (St V and Grenadines) |
| ODL | open and distance learning |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| O-Level | Ordinary Level |
| PNG | Papua New Guinea |
| RTO | registered training organisation |
| SACMEQ | Southern African Consortium of Educational Quality |
| SAT | Standardised Achievement Tests |
| TVET | technical and vocational education and training |
| UWI | University of the West Indies |
| VET | vocational education and training |

Part I COUNTRY PROFILES

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Structure of guidebook

The *Guidebook to Education in the Commonwealth* is presented in two sections. The first section contains background information about the 31 countries that have submitted information about their education initiatives for inclusion in the guidebook. The second section of the publication provides reports on more than 60 education initiatives, with activity-specific, detailed information about:

- the theme of each initiative;
- key issues addressed;
- learners and other participants;
- goals, objectives, outputs and outcomes;¹
- how the initiative was implemented;
- any challenges faced and how these were resolved;
- advice for other Commonwealth countries considering a similar initiative; and
- contact details for the initiative, if more specific data is required.

1.2 Locations of initiatives



1.3 Background to country education systems

The information contained in this chapter provides a brief summary of the background, development and current education priorities of each of the 31 countries that have contributed to the guidebook. Where recent statistics for each of the contributing countries are available, those data are included in a table following each country description.

As can be noted from each of the country descriptions and data tables, a wide range of information sources have been used. Wherever possible, current available primary sources for each Commonwealth country government (annual reports, other government publications, official webpages, donor reports) have been used.

Commonwealth publications and websites have also provided useful information about countries and their education systems. Secondary sources, where appropriate and valid – such as regional education and training bodies and consortia – have allowed some data confirmation and cross-checking.

Many countries provided broad statistical data for this publication in response to a request by the Commonwealth Secretariat. This data includes the number of enrolments, institutions and teacher numbers across the four levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary. Clearly these figures will provide only broad data, as they do not necessarily differentiate between, for example, *full-time equivalents* or *total staff employed* when listing teacher numbers. Similarly, some countries include pre-primary and primary enrolments in a single number when reporting such data. In some cases, schools for students with special needs have been included separately in primary and secondary schooling data; in others these data have not been provided. In addition, in terms of tertiary-level data, it is always difficult for participating countries to decide whether to include, for example, *adult and continuing education* facilities, institutions and enrolments in tertiary numbers in the tables. Similarly, some countries choose to list in their statistical records only the number of individual universities, while others list total number of campuses.

Where individual countries represented in the guidebook were unable to provide statistical data, this has been based on the information available from UNESCO's Institute of Statistics (UIS) searchable databases. However, as the UIS database is usually dependent upon country-supplied information, gaps in the UIS database will reflect corresponding gaps in individual country data.

Therefore, in acknowledging the limited precision of the statistical data included in the guidebook, its purpose nevertheless has been to provide participating countries with an indication of the relative size of their counterparts' education systems. In this way, comparisons and decisions about the relevance and/or transferability of specific initiatives can be made with a reasonable knowledge of systemic equivalence – or otherwise.

Chapter 2

Country Profiles

2.1 Australia

Country education system

Australia's first formal schools began in New South Wales about 200 years ago and slowly increased in number as other locations were settled. Public (government) school systems did not begin until considerably later than this; first primary schools, then expanding into the secondary level around the 1880s. Australian universities were first established in the middle of the nineteenth century, while early childhood education (apart from services offered by community kindergartens and private providers) is a relatively recent enhancement to Australian education offerings.

Schooling in Australia generally begins with a kindergarten or preparatory year, and is usually followed by 12 years of primary and secondary schooling. In Year 12, the final year of secondary school, studies are usually directed towards attaining a state- or territory-based government-endorsed certificate that is recognised by all Australian universities and vocational education and training institutions, and by international universities.

Responsibility for education lies with individual Australian states and territories—although systems vary slightly. The Australian government works with state and territory government and non-government education authorities, to ensure a continuing high level of teaching and learning in Australian schools.

Schools in Australia operate usually five days each week between 8.30 am and 3.30 pm, although early childhood classes have shorter hours, and evening schools are offered in some secondary institutions. The main school vacation in Australia takes place from mid-December to late January – in the country's summer – while short breaks (one or two weeks) separate the schooling system's standard four terms.²

Currently, Australia's National Curriculum is being developed progressively in three phases, based on the eight key learning areas outlined in the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians:³

- phase one – English, mathematics, science and history;
- phase two – languages, geography and the arts;
- phase three – health and physical education, information and communication technology, design and technology, economics and business and civics and citizenship.

Around 90 per cent of Australian secondary schools also offer vocational education programmes, in addition to the standard school curriculum.

Australian universities are autonomous and self-accrediting, and are established under particular legislation of the relevant Australian state or territory. Most university public funding is provided by the Australian government, under the regulations contained in the Higher Education Support Act 2003. State and territory governments can accredit other tertiary institutions (through an accrediting authority), but the institutions must be listed on the Australian Qualifications Framework Register before they can award qualifications to students.

Nationally recognised higher education qualifications include degrees at bachelor, master's or doctorate levels. Other qualifications include diplomas, advanced diplomas, associate degrees, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas. About 73 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in tertiary education (2006).

As an alternative to university, the Australian vocational education and training sector (VET) gives students the opportunity to:

- gain the skills they need to enter the workforce for the first time;
- re-enter the workforce;
- retrain for a new job;
- upgrade their skills for an existing job; or
- gain additional qualifications.

Traineeships and apprenticeships are available across a range of trades and other occupations in most business and industry sectors. VET qualifications are delivered by registered training organisations (RTOs) that must be registered to provide government-accredited qualifications.

Statistical overview⁴

| | Pre-primary* | Primary** | Secondary** | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Total enrolments *** | 219,741 | 2,037,148 | 1,482,384 | 857,148 ***** |
| Total number of institutions | 4,676 | 6,312 | 2,703***** | 51 |
| Total number of teachers | – | 130,598 | 124,512 | – |

* 2009 data

** 2011 data

*** Full-time students, not FTEs

**** Figure includes 1,306 combined primary and secondary schools

***** Data does not include international student enrolments

2.2 The Bahamas

Country education system

School in The Bahamas begins with a nursery year for children aged three, then kindergarten for those aged four. Children between the ages of five and eleven attend primary school and continue to high school and Grade 12. School attendance is compulsory between the ages of five and sixteen. The Ministry of Education has responsibility for all educational institutions in The Bahamas.

The primary level covers pre-school and Grades 1–6, after which pupils transfer to the Junior High level (Grades 7–9), and then to Senior High (Grades 10–12). ‘These levels are fairly distinct in Department of Education schools in New Providence, with slight variations in Family Island schools, where some all-age schools remain’ (The Bahamas Ministry of Education, 2012).

Gross enrolment ratio for all levels combined was 74.1 per cent in 2008, with a primary female–male ratio of 1:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 1.03:1 (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 15:1 and for secondary 13:1 (2008).

The Bahamas government is the main provider of education at the primary and secondary levels. While the government provides pre-school facilities for only a small proportion of children aged three and four, all teachers in government owned and managed pre-schools are trained. However, the percentage of unqualified teachers in privately owned and operated schools is greater than 50 per cent (UNESCO IBE, 2007a).

With a population of more than 360,000 people, unevenly dispersed over 22 islands and cays, The Bahamas faces major challenges in bringing quality education to its people, and has had to seek creative strategies to deliver equitable levels of education – particularly to people in the more distant islands (Commonwealth of Learning, 2008). The innovative *grandfathering* initiative⁵ (described later in this guidebook) represents an attempt to increase access to quality early childhood environments throughout the island nation.⁶

Statistical overview⁷

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 33,977 | 34,406 | – |
| Total number of institutions | 54 * | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | 98 ** | 2,362 | 2,819 | – |

* Six public pre-schools, one public school with self-contained, specialised classroom at pre-school level, 45 primary schools with pre-school classrooms and two all-age schools with pre-school classrooms

** Public pre-primary schools only

2.3 Bangladesh

Country education system

Education in Bangladesh involves three major stages: primary, secondary, and higher education. Primary education lasts for five years, while secondary education continues for a further seven years, across three stages: three years of junior secondary, two years of secondary, and two years of higher secondary.

The entry age for primary school is six years. The junior, secondary and higher secondary stages are designed for age groups 11–13, 14–15 and 16–17 years respectively. Graduate level education is offered in general, technical, engineering, agriculture, business studies, and medical streams.

The gross enrolment overall for all levels of education was 48.7 per cent in 2008 with a primary female–male ratio of 1.04:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 1.12:1 (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 46:1 and for secondary 25:1 (2007–2009).

‘Overall, there are more than 17 million students at the primary level, and enrolments at the tertiary level are relatively small but growing very rapidly.’ (Bangladesh Ministry of Education, 2012). In the late 1980s, the government placed great emphasis on the improvement of the primary education system in an attempt to raise the rate of literacy; a major scheme was undertaken at that time to establish one primary school for every 2,000 people in Bangladesh.

Management of the education system is the responsibility of two ministries: the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, responsible for primary education and mass literacy; and the Ministry of Education (MoE), responsible for secondary, vocational and tertiary education.

Primary-level education is provided under two main streams: general and Madrasah, while secondary education has three major streams: general, technical–vocational and Madrasah. Higher education, likewise, has three streams: general (pure and applied science, arts, business and social science), Madrasah, and technology education, which includes agriculture, engineering, medical, textile, leather technology and information and communication technology (ICT) (Bangladesh Ministry of Education, 2004).

‘Madrasahs function parallel to the three major stages, have similar core courses as in the general stream (primary, secondary and post-secondary) but have an additional emphasis on religious studies.’ (Ibid).

Education sector allocations are currently about 2.3 per cent of GDP and 14 per cent of total government expenditure. The Government of Bangladesh is aware that maintaining this commitment to the education sector is imperative for Bangladesh to achieve its Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Bangladesh Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Ministry of Education is planning to devolve governance within the current structure. When implemented, the central government will be responsible for policies, financing, quality standards, and monitoring and evaluation, while administering schools and related services will be the responsibility of sub-national organisations.

The MoE is transferring some responsibility for monitoring school performance and ensuring public disclosure of information, etc. to the district and upazila⁸ levels, while the Ministry’s Financial Management Reform Programme is expected to increase accountability and transparency.

About 6 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in tertiary education (2005). The nation’s main universities are at Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Jahangirnagar and Mymensingh (agriculture), while there are also several private universities in Dhaka, and an open university project began 20 years ago.⁹

The Campaign for Popular Education is a national coalition of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the field of literacy and education. It was established in 1991 with 15 members, and by 2011 it comprised more than 400 organisations (Campaign for Public Education, 2012).

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Total enrolments | 1,233,593 | 16,987,106 | 11,394,831 | 1,582,175 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | 395,281 | 400,052 | – |

2.4 Barbados

Country education system

Primary education in Barbados begins at four years of age and continues to the age of eleven, at which stage students sit for the Common Entrance Examination (CEE). The system caters to approximately 60,000 students annually – 28,000 at the primary level, 22,000 at the secondary level and more than 11,000 at the tertiary level. There are 23 government secondary schools in Barbados, most of which are co-educational. There are also several private secondary schools. The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 14:1 and for secondary, 15:1 (2009).

There are more than 70 government primary schools along with several privately run schools. After primary schooling, secondary education is provided for children aged 11 to 18 years. At age 16, students sit for the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) examinations – the equivalent of General Certificate of Education (GCE) O-Levels. At around the age of 18, those students who continue at school can sit for the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (equivalent to GCE A-Level), also set by the Council.

The Barbados government pays the cost of education of Barbadian students at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, including providing the necessary textbooks. A strong emphasis on education has resulted in a national literacy rate of around 98 per cent, which is one of the highest in the world (Barbados Education, 2012).

The country's education philosophy is to use education as a 'tool for national development by ensuring that society develops social, cultural, economic and political viability' (Barbados Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, 2012). Education is promoted nationally as a lifelong activity which seeks to produce culturally-based, technologically-driven, diverse and dynamic outcomes for all of its citizens.

To achieve this, the Barbados Ministry of Education employs strategies which:

- promote learning as a collaborative experience;
- are responsive to, and influenced by, the needs of beneficiaries;
- recognise different abilities, and ensure that these are addressed by schools;
- accommodate different learning styles;
- allow each student to develop at his/her own pace;
- promote creativity, self-esteem and confidence;
- reinforce cultural and spiritual values;
- take a research-driven and consultative approach to developing programmes; and
- promote the holistic development of young people through the creation of an enabling environment (UNESCO IBE, 2010a).

Tertiary education in Barbados is provided at Erdiston Teachers' College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College. The University of the West Indies (UWI), which has a high reputation for its standards, operates three campuses in the Caribbean, with the Cave Hill Campus located in Barbados. UWI has current linkages with other international universities, including those in Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Sweden, UK, USA and the similarly multi-campus University of the South Pacific.¹⁰

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 28,000 | 22,000 | 11,000 |
| Total number of institutions | 5 | 71 | 33 | 3 |
| Total number of teachers | – | – | – | – |

2.5 Cameroon

Country education system

Primary schooling in Cameroon is free and compulsory. The duration of primary education is usually seven years (from ages five to twelve). Students generally attend secondary schools between the ages of twelve and nineteen, of which four years are spent at the lower-secondary level and three at the upper-secondary level.¹¹

The gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined was 60.4 per cent in 2009, with a primary female–male ratio of 0.86:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 0.83:1. The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 46:1 and for secondary is 16:1 (2009).

‘In Cameroon, the two distinct educational systems inherited from the French and the British colonial systems persist, albeit there have been many attempts to unify them and harmonise them into a single system responsive to national needs.’ (Basung, 2002). Cameroon therefore retains two major and distinctive education systems: a Francophone Cameroon education system and an Anglophone Cameroon education system. Many secondary schools are bilingual, with instruction in both French and English. Missionary schools, established during the early days of colonial government, are a significant provider of education services, and are partly subsidised by the government.

The Anglophone education system (accounting for approximately 20 per cent) operates in the previous British colonial territory in the South West and North West regions of Cameroon, as well as some schools in Douala and Yaoundé which service the Anglophone population in those locations. The Francophone system (80 per cent) operates throughout the remainder of the country.

In addition to these independent Anglophone and Francophone systems, true bilingual institutions have been encouraged in Cameroon, and a small number of (highly sought after) government institutions provide a genuine bilingual education, for example, the Government Bilingual Grammar School in Molyko Buea.

About 7 per cent of the relevant student age group is enrolled in tertiary education. There are state universities at Yaoundé (two), Dschang, Ngaoundéré, Douala and Buea, the most well-known of which is the University of Yaoundé, established in 1962, which has four regional campuses. In addition, the use of and access to open and distance learning (ODL) in Cameroon is increasing steadily, particularly in tertiary education.

The best-known distance education programme is that of the University of Dschang – in its Faculty of Agronomy. For several years, this institution has been running a diploma programme in agriculture by distance learning. To further support distance education, the University of Dschang also has a media unit and a campus FM radio station which addresses the training of farmers and extension officers, as well as information dissemination concerning HIV/AIDS prevention in rural communities (Akume, 2008).

The Fotso Victor University Institute of Technology in Bandjoun is attached to the University of Dschang, and combines ODL and information and communication technologies through online degrees and higher national diploma programmes supported by the Agency Universitaire de la Francophonie, with accreditation through a Quebec (Canada) university.

The University of Buea also recently started a pilot distance education programme in education: ‘The programme recruits students into a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme for primary school teachers... while course writing is facilitated through co-operation with the National Open University of Nigeria, under the Regional Training and Research Institute for Open and Distance Learning (RETRIDAL) initiative.’ (Akume, 2008).

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 316,700 | 3,510,396 | 1,021,265 | 22,645 |
| Total number of institutions | 4923 | 14,232 | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | 14,522 | 76,655 | – | 4,235 |

2.6 Canada

Country education system

Education in Canada falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of each of the country's ten provinces and three territories. Each province or territory has at least one ministry or department responsible for education and advanced education. An intergovernmental body, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), was established in 1967 to provide co-ordination and communication between the different provincial government education bodies.

It serves as 'a forum to discuss policy issues; a mechanism through which to undertake activities, projects, and initiatives in areas of mutual interest; a means by which to consult and co-operate with national education organisations and the federal government; and an instrument to represent the education interests of the provinces and territories internationally. All 13 provinces and territories are members of CMEC. There are, however, significant differences between the education systems of different provinces.' (CMEC, 2012).

The provincial and territory Ministers of Education work through CMEC on a range of both short- and long-term activities. These include:

- representing CMEC members on education-related international bodies;
- contributing to fulfilling Canada's international treaty obligations;
- providing a national clearinghouse and referral service on educational and occupational qualifications;
- assessing the skills and competencies of Canadian students;
- developing education indicators and reporting on them;
- sponsoring education-related statistical research;
- administering Canada's national official-languages programmes; and
- consulting and acting on elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education issues.

Among other work, CMEC is also currently involved in priority activities related to Aboriginal education, literacy, and post-secondary capacity.

In April 2008, CMEC released *Learn Canada 2020*, a joint ministerial statement that reinforces provincial and territorial responsibility for the four pillars of lifelong learning – early childhood learning and development, elementary and secondary schooling, post-secondary education, and adult learning and skills development – and proposes 'working collaboratively with key partners and stakeholders to ensure that all Canadians benefit from the strength and diversity of provincial and territorial education systems.' (CMEC, 2012).

Education in Canada is mainly publicly funded, although private institutions also operate. Three levels, primary, secondary and post-secondary education, can be preceded by an optional kindergarten period for four to five year olds. Primary school begins when children are aged six.

Secondary schools extend to Grades 11 or 12, depending on the province. From there, students can begin their tertiary studies, at a university, college, or at a Cégep (College of General and Vocational Education) in Quebec. Cégep studies involve two years of general education, or three years of technical education between high school and university.

About 59 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in tertiary education (2000–01). Post-secondary education expanded rapidly in Canada during the 1980s and 1990s, with women showing the faster increase, so that they now outnumber men.

At the 93rd CMEC meeting in 2008, ministers of education from across Canada met in Toronto and agreed to new initiatives in Aboriginal education, literacy, and post-secondary

education capacity, reflecting their key priorities. (These are reflected in the initiatives section of the guidebook).

Ministers affirmed that eliminating the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples was an economic and moral necessity. The ministers confirmed their commitment to ensuring that all Canadians have access to quality education, acknowledging that in a global economy, every Canadian needed to achieve their full potential.

Public spending on education in Canada was 4.9 per cent of GDP in 2008. The primary female–male ratio is 1:1 and the secondary female–male ratio is 0.98:1 (2007).¹²

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total enrolments | 489,423 | 2,200,335 | 2,668,134 | 1,553,800 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | – | 376,830 | – |

2.7 Cook Islands

Country education system

Education in Cook Islands is compulsory from five until sixteen. In general, Cook Islands follows the New Zealand education system to secondary level, and provides free education for primary and secondary students. The government also provides financial assistance for independent schools run by church and other groups (UNESCO IBE, 2007c).

The country also has a trade training centre, hospitality and tourism training centre and sports academy. The Fiji-based University of the South Pacific maintains an extension centre in Rarotonga and provides vocational, foundation, degree and postgraduate level courses, some using video links with the Fiji centre (Commonwealth of Nations, 2012a; Commonwealth Education Online, 2012; UNESCO IBE, 2007c).

The goal of education in Cook Islands is ‘to build the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of Cook Islands’ people to ensure sustainability of the language and culture of Cook Islands and its economic growth, and to enable individuals to put their capabilities to best use in all areas of their life, become valued members of society, and adapt successfully to the modern, ever-changing world.’ (UNESCO IBE, 2007c).

The country’s education guiding principles are of partnership, equity, efficiency, relevancy and quality. These principles form the basis of education policy and are embedded in school practices.

The new Education Bill Act 2012 is intended to provide for an education system in Cook Islands with an emphasis on:

- learning for life, namely learning at any time during a person’s life (from early childhood through to late adulthood), recognising that each person’s individual circumstances may mean that they may want to access learning opportunities at different times in their life;
- strengthening Cook Islands’ Maori language, culture, perspectives and aspirations, in order to provide a firm foundation for engaging with the wider world;
- everyone in Cook Islands (including people with special needs, for example) having equitable access to quality learning, through a range of programmes that meet their individual needs and celebrate their individual talents;
- a high level of community involvement in determining quality educational outcomes;
- the right of everyone who is involved in the education system, including students, to be treated with dignity, respect and understanding. (UNESCO IBE, 2007c).

The Ministry of Education values the importance of research in achieving the goals of its Education Master Plan (see initiatives section of guidebook), in seeking to address needs in areas of policy analysis, stakeholder consultations, baseline statistical data collection and pilot studies.

Currently, the following education sector research is being undertaken:

- programme evaluation of the Numeracy Project;
- a general overview of research compilation; and
- Lead Teacher Programme evaluation.

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 481 | 1,870 | 1,797 | 100 FTEs |
| Total number of institutions | 24 | 25 * | 4 ** | 2 |
| Total number of teachers | 34 | 111 | 125 | 15 |

* including 12 Area Schools: Early Childhood Education (ECE)–Yr10/11

** +12 Area Schools

2.8 Dominica

Country education system

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development is responsible for primary and secondary education; provides support for tertiary education; and establishes policies and standards for supervising early childhood education. In addition to managing Dominica's education sector, the Ministry manages Dominica's human resource development (excluding public officers).

Education in Dominica is compulsory from ages 5 to 16; students usually attend primary school for seven years, and secondary school for five years, at the end of which they write for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination; some may complete a further two years of post-secondary education.

Some students may subsequently go on to tertiary studies in Dominica or overseas, seek employment, or attend a state-funded technical college. Children with special needs are catered for by institutions such as the Alpha Centre. Many other children with special needs are now included in mainstream classrooms.

Free textbooks are provided for primary school pupils and for secondary students in Year 1. The Education Trust Fund supports poor students, specifically those in secondary schools and tertiary level who cannot afford tuition, transportation, examination fees or textbooks and uniforms (Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, 2012). A school transport scheme targets secondary and primary school students in rural areas, and a school feeding programme provides a midday meal to vulnerable and at-risk students.

Further education is available at the regional University of the West Indies, which has an open campus centre in Dominica. The Dominica State College, a publicly funded institution, offers programmes leading to General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-Levels and associate degrees; it operates four faculties and has a continuing studies division.¹³

Dominica sees its education sector priorities for the near future as:

- improving teaching and learning, teacher recruitment and quality;
- creating safe and secure learning environments;
- continuing the development of curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 (11–16 years); and
- pursuing universal access to early childhood education.

Gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined was 74.5 per cent in 2007 with a primary female–male ratio of 0.99:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 1.06:1 (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 16:1 and for secondary 14:1 (2009).

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 1,639 | 8,144 | 6,093 | 1,595 |
| Total number of institutions | 75 | 60 | 15 | 1 |
| Total number of teachers | 169 | 576 | 515 | 80 |

2.9 The Gambia

Country education system

The Gambia offers its students six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary schooling. A further three years of senior secondary education are available, followed by tertiary study options. Technical and vocational training are provided at the Gambia Technical Training Institute, and higher education at the University of The Gambia.

Gross enrolment for all levels of education combined was 57.3 per cent in 2007 with a primary female–male ratio of 1.04:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 0.96:1 (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 37:1 and for secondary, 24:1 (2009).

The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) is responsible for education at the primary and secondary levels. In 2007, a new ministry was created for tertiary and higher education, and research and scientific technology. That new ministry – the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology – is responsible for policy development, management and co-ordination of programmes relating to higher education, research, science and technology.

The current Gambia Education Policy (2004–15) recognises the importance of education in the early years. Central government policy is to work in partnership with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local authorities and communities to achieve this outcome.

Among the ministry's recent initiatives to promote equal access to education for girls from an early age is a Scholarship Trust Fund. Its purpose is to boost the school enrolment, retention and performance rates of girls from rural communities.

MoBSE's education plan and programme is particularly sensitive to the learning needs of all children, catering especially for girls, women, the physically challenged, young people, and the poor.

Commencing at the youngest school-age level, the programme promotes a holistic approach to early childhood education and development. Close supervision occurs for nursery and childcare centres, to ensure the standards set for child-friendly environment and care are met across the country, especially in the rural areas – where MoBSE works closely with community development offices (Government of The Gambia, 2012).

A construction programme for additional classrooms and the establishment of new schools to cope with the expansion of universal basic education is continuing; and in remote areas, construction of purpose-built teachers' quarters has started (Ibid).

An incentive package provides free education for girls in poorer communities and special allowances are available for teachers and caregivers in special education institutions. Children with mild physical disabilities are being mainstreamed, while additional facilities and centres are being established in some rural communities for those with more severe disabilities.

'For the 10 per cent of the Gambian school-aged population enrolled in Madrasahs, the curriculum is being synchronised with that of conventional schools; and English language is being introduced (as a school subject). In-service training will be extended to Koranic teachers for skills upgrading.' (Ibid).

To encourage attendance, especially in poorer regions, school lunches are provided for more than 60,000 children, a figure which is expected to double in the near future.¹⁴

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 29,910 | 228,495 | 115,198 | – |
| Total number of institutions | 265 | 680 | 358 | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | 5,944 | 3,133 | 362 |

2.10 Grenada

Country education system

As is the case with many Commonwealth countries, Grenada's education system is modelled on the British system (Grenada Industrial Development Corporation, 2012). Education is believed to be a basic human need and right as well as a means of accessing other basic needs. It is also considered important in the acceleration of personal, economic and social development. 'This right to education should not be limited by gender, ethnicity, economic status and economic or social background.' (Government of Grenada, 2012).

The focus of education in Grenada centres on an understanding of historical, cultural, economic, political and social issues relating to the nation and other peoples (UNESCO IBE, 2010b). There is also strong attention paid to the commitment of the rights and responsibilities of the individual in a democratic society. Basic literacy and numeracy is targeted along with the ability to think creatively and rationally.

Pre-school is not compulsory but caters to children aged three to five. Primary education is compulsory and last six years. Students then sit the Common Entrance Exam (CEE) to determine their eligibility for secondary schooling. Secondary education offers a three-year lower cycle and a two-year upper cycle. At the end of secondary education, the majority of students sit the Caribbean Examinations Council examinations (CXC) or the Cambridge General Certificate in Education (GCE).

The School Leaving Certificate Examination (XLCE) is administered to children aged 14 or over who have been unsuccessful in completing the CEE. This gives them the opportunity to access technical and vocational training centres, or to provide certification for a profession.

As well as the usual education administrative branches, the ministry has recently established dedicated sections responsible for curriculum development, guidance and counselling, materials production, information technology, planning and development, project management, testing and examination, and a scholarships desk.

The net enrolment ratio is 98.5 per cent for primary and 85.4 per cent for secondary (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 17:1 and for secondary 18:1 (2009).¹⁵

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 3,709 | 12,513 | 10,323 | 2,987 |
| Total number of institutions | 105 | 73 | 22 | 2 |
| Total number of teachers | 272 | 891 | 701 | 75 |

2.11 Guyana

Country education system

The education sector in Guyana has undergone significant changes in the past 20 years, to meet the changing needs of the nation and its people. In the past, the focus has been on improving access, achieving universal compulsory primary education, and offering students at least three years' secondary education. A more recent focus has been on providing a better foundation by improving systemic quality, and basic literacy and numeracy.

The net enrolment ratio is 98.8 per cent for primary education, with a female–male ratio of 0.99:1 and gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 78.6 per cent (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 26:1 and for secondary 22:1 (2009).

Guyana has 11 education districts, responsible to the Ministry of Education, and these districts implement the Ministry's policies on curricula, funding, and quality assurance, established by the central government.

Children in Guyana start school at five and continue for up to 11 years of schooling. After six years at primary school, students can continue onto five years of secondary schooling. There is an option of a further two years of secondary schooling, if appropriate. After completing their primary education, students can sit for the Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE); and at the end of secondary school, the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) examination.

Tertiary institutions offering further study include the Cyril Potter College of Education (teacher education), the Guyana College of Agriculture, the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (training youth workers), and the University of Guyana, which operates on two campuses. The University of Guyana also provides adult education programmes. In 2008, the female–male gross enrolment ratio in Guyana tertiary education was 142:100.¹⁶

Although the Ministry of Education is committed to providing free and compulsory education from pre-primary to secondary levels, non-government schools also operate in Guyana. Through meaningful partnerships with teachers, their representative organisations, parents and guardians and the broader communities, the Ministry of Education remains committed to improving education quality.

The development of the nation's 2008–2013 Education Strategic Plan (ESP) involved stakeholders, and identified the challenges and impediments to education. Implementing it has subsequently required comprehensive planning. The education strategy is the fourth in a series of education plans developed over the past 20 years (MoE Guyana, 2008).

The current strategy identifies 'the major issues and constraints in the development of education and outlines the major strategic activities to be implemented to attain the desired policy objectives' (MoE Guyana, 2012).

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 25,470 | 99,241 | 80,676 | 7,939 |
| Total number of institutions | 1,811 | 4,031 | 3,766 | 752 |
| Total number of teachers | – | – | – | – |

2.12 Jamaica

Country education system

Primary education in Jamaica involves children between the ages of 5 and 11 years, across Grades 1–6. Students in the lower (secondary) school (Grades 7–9) study a wide range of subjects, including Spanish and French as second languages. Net enrolment ratios are 80.5 per cent for primary and 76.7 per cent for secondary in 2008, with a primary female–male ratio of 0.97:1 and secondary female–male ratio of 1.04:1 (2008). The secondary pupil–teacher ratio is 20:1 (2008).

Although starting with general science studies in the early secondary grades, in the upper (secondary) school (Grades 10–11), students take physics, biology and chemistry as separate subjects. In Grade 10, students choose between six and ten subjects (usually selecting eight), for which they will sit the Caribbean Examination Council's (CXC) Caribbean Secondary Education Certification (CSEC) school-leaving examinations (equivalent to O-level). Students can usually determine their own subjects/curricula, but these must include mathematics and English language.

Other subjects are optional, although some schools include an additional compulsory subject – while most students also continue their study of a foreign language from the lower secondary level. After Grade 11, students have the option to enrol for sixth form. This involves two years of further study at the end of which they write the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE).

The Jamaican Ministry of Education has a strong focus on teacher training, and on mathematics and numeracy – as these are seen as indispensable skills. Special education is provided mainly by private voluntary organisations in partnership with the government. The ministry is responsible for lifelong education and training across the country, and co-ordinates the services offered by donors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and communities (MoE Jamaica, 2012). More than 70 organisations, many affiliated to churches, run adult education programmes.

To enrol in a university in Jamaica, students must have successfully completed sixth form. An alternative entry is possible if a student is awarded a three-year diploma from an 'accredited post-secondary college'. Although universities in Jamaica are the only institutions able to confer degrees, many of the country's colleges offer joint programmes with local universities. Some United States' universities offer extension, part-time programmes, usually taken by Jamaicans currently in the workforce.¹⁷

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 159,370 | 299,344 | 265,175 | 71,352 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | 6,455 | 14,515 | 18,222 | – |

2.13 Kenya

Country education system

In 1985, Kenya introduced its current 8+4+4 system: Grades 1–8 are in primary; Grades 9–12 are in secondary; and secondary school graduates can apply to study for four years in a university. The system was created to help those students who did not plan to pursue higher education; in the past, it has helped reduce dropout rates and assist those students who leave primary school to find employment. Net enrolment ratios are 83.3 per cent for primary and 49.6 per cent for secondary (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 47:1 and for secondary 30:1 (2009).

At present, about 85 per cent of Kenyan children attend primary school¹⁸, and the gross enrolment ratio for secondary schools was 36.8 per cent in 2007 (UNESCO IBE, 2010c). Secondary schools are of two types, private secondary schools or government-aided schools.¹⁹ Acceptance into either category of school is based on a student's score in the Kenya Certification of Primary Education. Continuing students in Kenya's major secondary schools take four years to prepare for further study, at which time they sit for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.²⁰

After the first Kenyan (state) university, the University of Nairobi, was established in 1970, others began operating, and many private universities have since opened in response to the increased demand for tertiary studies. As well as the University of Nairobi, the Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Egerton University, Moi University, Maseno University and the Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology offer Kenyans a range of higher education options (MoE Kenya, 2012).

Colleges that provide technical and practical skills offer two- or three-year certificate, diploma and higher national diploma courses, and include teacher training colleges (TTCs), the Kenya Medical Training College, and some polytechnics. About 3 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in tertiary education (2005).

A current national ICT strategy for education and training in e-government, management information systems and e-learning aims to prepare education system planners with comprehensive system data, and to enhance ICT skills for both teachers and students.

The ministry, with the support of the Kenya ICT Trust Fund, has also set up national and regional ICT support centres, mostly in the polytechnics and universities, to provide telephone or online technical support to schools.²¹

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 9,389,200 | 1,701,501 | – |
| Total number of institutions | 38,523 | 27,489 | 7,311 | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | – | – | – |

2.14 Malawi

Country education system

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) is responsible for Malawi's education sector as well as for science and technology. The government's vision is for the education sector to be a catalyst for socio-economic development and industrial growth – and 'an instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and the voiceless' (Malawi Government, 2012a). Through MoEST, the government has developed the National Education Sector Plan (2008–2017), which is based on 'equitable access, relevant quality and management and governance' (Ibid).

In implementing the 2008–2017 Plan, the Malawi government has identified the following goals for education:

Basic education (Primary)

- construct classrooms/schools to achieve a ratio of one classroom to 40 pupils, associated school facilities, and additional teacher development centres.
- provide textbooks to attain a ratio of one textbook to one pupil for all grades, teacher reference materials, and improved classroom resources.
- embed continuous professional development, achieve better governance and management of schools through improved community involvement, increase decentralisation of financial matters, and implement double shifts (in the short term).

Secondary schools

- upgrade community day secondary schools (CDSSs), construct girls' hostels and other school infrastructure in CDSSs, continue with the rehabilitation of government schools, and establish 'Schools of Excellency'.
- provide textbooks and materials in new and current subject areas, reference materials for teachers, functional libraries, and science kits and materials.
- improve advisory services and inspection, better identify needy students and subsequently provide bursaries, increase school-based financial decision-making, improve maintenance and rehabilitation of schools, and train more subject specialist teachers.

Tertiary education

- undertake a tertiary curriculum review, introduce distance and open primary teacher training, build or refurbish more primary teacher training colleges, continue to rehabilitate and expand public universities, and encourage private partnerships at the higher education level (Malawi Government, 2012b).

At a broader level, the Malawi government is keen to ensure that a substantial allocation of its budget is for education. It seeks to 'appeal to the community, private sector, faith organisations and alumni to work together and to support the government in ensuring that education is rekindled, driving and responding to the economy (public–private partnerships in education); and to continue and intensify cross-cutting issues' (Malawi Government, 2012a) such as HIV/AIDS, health and nutrition in schools and colleges, gender equity and special needs education.

Malawi's primary and secondary net enrolment ratios are 91.3 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, and gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 59.3 per cent (2009).²²

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 830,000 | 4,034,230 | 256,342 | 29,301 |
| Total number of institutions | 9,300 | 5,395 | 1,041 | 38 |
| Total number of teachers | 26,000 | 53,031 | 11,300 | 1,012 |

2.15 Malaysia

Country education system

Malaysia's net enrolment ratios are 94.1 per cent for primary and 67.9 per cent for secondary, and the gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 69.8 per cent (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 15:1 (2008). Sekolah Pondok, Madrasah and other Islamic schools were the first schools available to Malaysian students. Subsequently, secular schools in Malaysia – introduced by the British colonial government – were established. Initially, the colonial government did not offer secondary students Malay-language secondary schools, so primary students who had studied in Malay had to adjust to English-language instruction in their secondary schooling.

As many immigrants from China and India arrived (in what was then called Malaya) during the colonial period, the Chinese and Indian communities established their own schools with school curricula and teachers from China and India, teaching in their own languages (StateUniversity.com, 2012).

In the early years of independence, these schools and mission schools were expected to adopt the national curriculum, but could retain their language-specific instruction. However, between the early 1970s and the early 1980s, the government began to change English-medium primary and secondary national schools into Malay-medium national schools. This change was made gradually, starting from the first year of primary school, followed subsequently by later school levels.

Malaysia's education system involves six years of compulsory education, starting at age six, and is the responsibility of two government ministries: the Ministry of Education, for pre-school, primary, secondary and post-secondary schooling; and the Ministry of Higher Education, for tertiary education. Although education is the responsibility of the Federal government, each state has a department to co-ordinate education management.

The main legislation currently governing education in Malaysia is the Education Act of 1996, while the Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006–2010 is the basis for the 'development of the country's human capital towards a knowledge-based economy' (Government of Malaysia, 2012). In terms of education policy, this entails 'improving access to and the quality of the education system at all levels; making national schools the school of choice; nurturing top quality research and development; and empowering women and youth.' (Ibid).

More than 900,000 students (about 32 per cent of the relevant Malaysian age group) are currently undertaking higher education in Malaysia, in 20 public universities, 33 private universities and university colleges, and across a wide range of foreign university campuses, polytechnics, community colleges and private colleges.

Of the many public and private universities located throughout the country, the longest established are the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur (1905) and the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Skudai, Johor (established in 1904 as the Technical School, becoming a university in 1972).²³

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total enrolments | 786,177 | 3,000,676 | 2,546,102 | 1,000,694 |
| Total number of institutions | – | 7,723 | 2,296 | – |
| Total number of teachers | 43,410 | 226,467 | 186,481 | 67,470 |

2.16 Malta

Country education system

Education in Malta is compulsory until 16 years of age, and is provided by the government, churches and the private sector. Approximately 30 per cent of Malta's primary and secondary school students are enrolled in private schools, many of which are operated by the Catholic Church.

Net enrolment ratios are 91.3 per cent for primary and 82 per cent for secondary, and the gross enrolment ratio for all levels combined is 78.4 per cent (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary schools in Malta is 11:1 and for secondary 9:1 (2007).

In 1878, English replaced Italian as the primary language of instruction, and in 1946, education was made compulsory because of the high number of children not attending school, resulting from poverty and the impact of the post-war years. In 1988, the compulsory education age in Malta was lowered from six to five (European Commission, 2007).

Three schooling stages operate: pre-primary (3–5), primary (5–11), and secondary (11–16), followed by a number of post-secondary education programmes leading to tertiary-level education, as well as vocational education and training programmes at post-secondary and tertiary levels. Pre-primary education is optional but is funded by the government.

At 16 years of age, secondary students sit for their Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) examinations, and at 18, they take the matriculation examinations (also known as MATSEC), to decide their eligibility to enter university, to progress to the higher diploma levels of vocational education and training, or to gain access to the labour market. However, early access to the labour market is discouraged so that students obtain higher qualifications and can thus commit to life-long learning.

A 2011 survey conducted by the Commission for Higher Education showed a significant increase in the participation rate of 17 year olds, from 60 per cent in 2009 to 73 per cent in 2010, attributable to a higher participation rate in the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), the nation's leading vocational college. For the first time, 63 students were awarded a vocational bachelor's degree (NCHE Malta, 2012).

The University of Malta (founded 1592 as the Jesuits' College) offers studies in medicine, law, architecture, engineering, education, arts, sciences, theology and diplomatic studies. MCAST, as well as the Institute of Tourism Studies, offer a range of vocational and professional education and training programmes.

The International Maritime Law Institute, the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, as well as the United Nations International Institute on Ageing, are among the international institutes based in the country.²⁴ Their qualifications are recognised by the Maltese authorities and by several other universities and UN member states.

Malta has identified its priorities for education over the next five years as:

- quality assurance of educational institutions' programmes and qualifications;
- education as a form of social justice and sustainability within the labour market;
- awareness of the importance of continuity in education from early childhood to lifelong learning;
- validation of informal and non-formal learning;
- mutual recognition of qualifications, primarily across Europe but also between Commonwealth countries; and
- funding for research in innovative and creative development (Government of Malta, 2012).

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary* |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total enrolments | 5,279 | 13,548 | 13,433 | 25,041 |
| Total number of institutions | 62 | 68 | 31 | 36 |
| Total number of teachers | 433 | 973 | 3,410 | – |

* Refer to 'NCHE Further and Higher Education Statistics 2010', Chapter Page 14, chart 2.1

2.17 Mauritius

Country education system

The Mauritius education system involves three years of pre-school education, then six years of free and compulsory primary schooling, followed by five years of secondary education, and a further two years of higher secondary options.

At the primary level, promotion from one grade to the next is automatic until Grade 6, when pupils sit for the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). After five years of secondary education, students undertake the Cambridge School Certificate, while successful higher secondary graduates are awarded the Cambridge Higher School Certificate.

Primary school pupils who are unsuccessful at the CPE examination and under 12 years of age may stay on at primary school for a further year, to attempt the examination a second time. Those who are not successful after a second attempt are offered a three-year pre-vocational education course.

Primary net enrolment ratio in Mauritius is 94 per cent, with a female–male ratio of 1:1 (2009). The gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 75.8 per cent (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 22:1 and for secondary, about 16:1 (2009).

On average, there is one primary school in every village in Mauritius, although the principle of catchment area is often used to manage the high demand for admission to popular schools in urban areas (SACMEQ, 2012a). Net enrolment ratios in 2006 were 95 per cent for primary and 82 per cent for secondary, with a combined gross enrolment ratio of 77 per cent. The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 22:1 and about 17:1 at the secondary level. Illiteracy among people aged 15–24 is relatively low, at 3.8 per cent (2006).

The Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology is responsible for the higher education sector. Although the University of Mauritius has the highest enrolments, other institutions offering tertiary studies include the University of Technology, the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, the Academy of Medicine, and the Mauritius College of the Air (distance education for adults and primary and secondary students). An important and current national priority is to ‘increase participation in tertiary education from the present gross tertiary enrolment rate of 42 per cent in 2009 to reach about 72 per cent by 2015.’ (Government of Mauritius, 2012).

The Tertiary Education Commission’s Strategic Plan 2007–2011 aims to position Mauritius as a regional knowledge hub, and a centre for higher learning and excellence. The Plan promotes the use of open and distance learning, to increase access to post-secondary education and lifelong learning, ‘both locally and regionally... to require that tertiary education is relevant to the needs of students in the country and the wider region’. (Tertiary Education Commission Mauritius, 2012).

In January 2009, the Ministry of Education’s project entitled ‘From Individual to Community: Quality Teaching in Mauritius’ was a finalist in the 2009 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The project encouraged a culture of collaboration among teachers and students of different schools, with the participation of parents. It resulted in major improvements in student performance, motivation and social interaction.²⁵

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Total enrolments | 35,974 | 117,922 | 132,555 | c. 46,000 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | 69 |
| Total number of teachers | 2,538 | 5,472 | 8,186 | c. 825 |

2.18 Mozambique

Country education system

Before 1975, missionary schools in Mozambique served local families in rural areas, while public schools, mainly in the larger population centres, catered for the Portuguese and those Mozambicans who (in the perception of the colonialists) had ‘qualified’ as Portuguese citizens. Private schools, which were mainly run by churches, were for wealthier residents. In 1973, Mozambique’s National System of Education was introduced. Net enrolment rates at primary and secondary level are 90.7 per cent and 14.7 per cent, respectively (2009). The primary school pupil-teacher ratio is 61:1 and 38:1 for secondary (2009).

The Mozambique Ministry of Education and Culture – Ministério da Educação e Cultura – has overall responsibility for the administration of all education institutions in the country. A provincial director is in charge in each of the 11 provinces, while each of Mozambique’s 140-plus districts has a district directorate.

Pre-school education is available, but expensive, and these institutions are usually run by the Ministry of Health or private institutions (SACMEQ, 2012b). Primary education is free and compulsory, and comprises two levels: lower primary (Grades 1–5) and upper primary (Grades 6–7). ‘After seven years of primary education, pupils have a choice of enrolling for general secondary education, lower primary teacher training colleges, basic technical and vocational schools, or secondary education for adults.’ (Ibid)

The first stage of secondary education, junior secondary, comprises three years (Grades 8–10), followed by senior secondary in Grades 11–12. Curriculum development for general education (primary, secondary and pre-university) and teacher training (basic and intermediate) is the responsibility of the National Institute for Educational Development (Ibid).

Removing national school fees and providing free textbooks in 2004, combined with a continuing programme of school construction and teacher training, resulted in a 70 per cent increase in enrolments in lower primary education. However, ‘over half of the children who began Grade 1 in 2000 did not complete Grade 7 by 2008. To achieve inclusive growth, the key strategic objective of the education system must be to ensure that as many children as possible start and finish primary school with competency in basic subjects and the skills that will help them find productive economic activities that will provide a better income.’ (Fox et al., 2012).

In 2000, the Ministry of Education started to decentralise school-level curriculum development and monitoring, allowing 20 per cent of the national curriculum for basic education to be ‘local’ (SACMEQ, 2012b).

Tertiary education, for those who complete Grade 12 successfully and pass an entry examination, is available at public and private universities, institutes and at schools of higher education and academies. The higher education private sector has undergone steady growth since the early 1990s, in terms of the number of institutions and student enrolment (Commonwealth of Nations, 2012b).

Although only 1 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in higher education (2002–03 data), the country’s higher education sector is growing. The country’s first national university, the Eduardo Mondlane University operates alongside smaller public institutions such as the Pedagogical University and the Institute for International Relations, while private institutions also provide full degree programmes.²⁶

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 5,313,993 | 952,909 | 146,038 |
| Total number of institutions | – | 10,988 | 561 | 85 |
| Total number of teachers | – | 92,163 | 17,532 | – |

2.19 Namibia

Country education system

The Namibian Constitution provides free education to the age of 16, or until completion of primary education (University of Szeged Klebelsberg Library, 2012). Children attend primary school for seven years in lower primary (Grades 1–4) and upper primary (Grades 5–7). Through continuous assessment, to measure the acquisition of basic competencies, pupils progress through the primary grades until a national Grade 7 examination in mathematics, English and science.

Secondary schooling comprises junior secondary for Grades 8–10 and senior secondary in Grades 11–12. Students sit for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) after Grade 10, and the Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education (HIGCSE) examinations at the end of Grade 12.

In 2002, Namibia restructured its education system into 13 regions, each supervised by regional directors of education, as part of an overall Namibian government policy to decentralise central government functions. And, although the Ministry has overall responsibility for managing the nation's education system, it is the regional education offices that 'implement educational programmes on a day-to-day basis, by working closely with schools and communities' (SACMEQ, 2012c).

Net enrolment ratios are 90.1 per cent for primary (2009) and 54.4 per cent for secondary (2008), with a gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined of 71.2 per cent (2008). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 30:1 (2009) and for secondary 25:1 (2008).

About six per cent of the relevant age group of Namibians is enrolled in tertiary education, at the University of Namibia, established in 1993, or at polytechnics and technical and teacher-training colleges. The Namibia College of Open Learning provides distance-learning services for remote learners, and to those for which this delivery mode is best suited.

- Namibia's key education priorities for the next five years are:
- expand access to early childhood development and pre-primary education;
- expand high-quality senior secondary education, vocational education and training, pre-entry tertiary education and training programmes;
- build system equity, quality and efficiency;
- strengthen the national knowledge and innovation system;
- create an enabling environment for the development of lifelong learning;
- improve school leadership and management, and introduce performance measures;
- introduce free primary education; and
- implement the Namibian School Feeding Programme.²⁷

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 8,475 | 406,535 | 174,260* | – |
| Total number of institutions | – | 1,038 | 447** | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | 14,549 | 7,523 | – |

* An additional 2,086 students are also enrolled in other secondary programmes

** A further 202 'other' institutions offer a secondary education

2.20 Papua New Guinea

Country education system

Education in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is managed across nineteen provinces and two district organisational units. All PNG children begin their basic education from age six in an elementary school in a language that they speak; for the next three years, they develop the basis for future learning.

At nine years of age, children continue their basic education in a primary school. After six years of primary education, children are expected ‘to have the skills to live happily and productively, contribute to their communities, and to use English to understand basic social, scientific, technological, personal concepts and value learning after grade eight’ (Government of Papua New Guinea, 2012).

The goal for secondary students in Grades 9 to 12 is to achieve their individual potential and to ‘lead productive lives as members of the local, national and international communities and to participate in further quality education and training’ (Ibid) – after having undertaken a broad range of subjects and work related activities that can be used in everyday life.

The expansion of flexible, open and distance education (FODE) in Papua New Guinea is believed to have the potential to service many users – at a lower cost to individuals. Further, open and distance learning (ODL) is seen as a means to address the challenges of long distances and the country’s difficult terrain, which the PNG government faces in delivering education services effectively.

The principal target groups for ODL services in Papua New Guinea are expected to be:

- students who choose to complete Grade 9 and 10 education through the ODL mode and then join the formal system following graduation from Grade 10;
- those who want to complete Grade 12 matriculation programmes to progress into tertiary institutions;
- people undertaking technical and vocational training courses; and
- those who are currently employed and who wish to upgrade their professional qualifications. (World Bank, 2010).

Another current education priority for Papua New Guinea is a system of self-sustaining institutions, to train potential workers in the formal and informal sectors.

There are six universities in PNG; all are accredited under the PNG Office of Higher Education and have establishing acts of parliament. The universities (and their main campuses) are:

- Divine Word University (various locations);
- Pacific Adventist University in Port Moresby;
- Papua New Guinea University of Natural Resources and Environment (Vudal) in Rabaul;
- University of Goroka in Goroka;
- University of PNG in Port Moresby; and the
- University of Technology (Unitech) in Lae.²⁸

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 600,557 | – | – |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | – | – | – |

2.21 Seychelles

Country education system

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Roman Catholic and Anglican churches opened mission schools in Seychelles, and these continued to operate even after the Seychelles government became responsible for schooling in 1944. With the opening of a technical college in 1970, locally trained teachers were available and this allowed many new schools to open.

Since 1981, a system of free and compulsory education has operated in Seychelles, from Grades 1 to 9, and beginning at age five. Nursery schools are available for children aged four, and these have a 90 per cent enrolment rate. 'The literacy rate for school-aged children had risen to more than 90 per cent by the late 1980s, and adult education classes helped raise adult literacy rates from 60 per cent to an estimated 85 per cent by the early 1990s.' (Photius, 2012).

Although the nation's children are first taught to read and write in Creole, beginning in Grade 3, English is used as a teaching language in some subjects, and French is introduced in Grade 6 (Country Studies, 2012). The net enrolment ratio at primary level is 94.4 per cent and 97.3 per cent at secondary level (2009), and the pupil-teacher ratio for primary is 14:1 and for secondary 13:1 (2009).

For the *early childhood stage* (3½ years to 8), the Seychelles government believes that the child is the agent of his or her own learning. The teacher's role is to organise and encourage this learning – often through play-based learning, especially during their first two years.

Primary education (7½ years to 12) encourages children to learn, and to gain confidence in their abilities. The curriculum at this stage emphasises process and skills development over the simple acquisition of information, and provides opportunities to learn through experience and practical experimentation.

In *secondary school* (11½ years to 17 years), students continue to receive a broad, balanced education, and can choose subject combinations to prepare them for career specialisation, or for more specialised training at the post-secondary level (MoE Seychelles, 2000).

After five years of secondary education, students have a range of tertiary study options, including: Seychelles Polytechnic, the Industrial Training Centre, the National Institute of Education, the National College of the Arts, and the Maritime Training Centre. The Seychelles Polytechnic has also been providing first-year undergraduate degree courses collaboratively with the University of Manchester, UK, since 2001.

The Seychelles School Improvement Programme (SIP) (UNESCO WEF, 2000), aimed at improving pupil performance by introducing and implementing development planning in schools, has been operating effectively since 1995²⁹. A quality assurance service was set up in 1999 to support the internal evaluation of schools (which originated from the SIP) and to remove external evaluation.³⁰

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 2,916 | 10,593 | 6,544 | 2,125 |
| Total number of institutions | 29 | 24 | 10 | – |
| Total number of teachers | 142 | 602 | 556 | 126 |

2.22 Singapore

Country education system

Formal education in Singapore begins in primary school, and runs from Primary 1 to Primary 6. Prior to this, kindergartens provide a structured three years of pre-school for children from three to six, and operate for five days each week, for three to four hours per day. Most kindergartens (run by the private sector, including community foundations, religious bodies, and social and business organisations) operate at least two sessions a day (MoE Singapore, 2012a).

Primary education consists of a four-year foundation stage from Primary 1–4, and a two-year orientation stage in Primary 5 and 6. Primary school students learn three core subjects: English language, a second language (mother tongue) and mathematics. These core subjects build literacy and problem solving skills, and are the basis for their continuing studies in primary and secondary school.

Students can also study subjects such as art, civics and moral education, music, social studies, physical education, and science, which is introduced in Primary 3. After the initial foundation stage (Primary 1 to Primary 4), the three core subjects are taught at a level that ‘corresponds with the abilities of each student’.³¹

At the end of Primary 6, all students sit for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), to determine their placement in a secondary school course that suits their abilities. Students can also seek admission to a secondary school through the Direct School Admission process, which allows some students to be enrolled if they have demonstrated high achievements in areas such as the arts and sports.

In secondary school, students are assigned to either an express or normal (academic or technical) course, based on their PSLE score. Secondary students can also move from one course to another, depending upon their academic performance in high school.

Students in both normal courses (academic and technical) sit for the Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education Examination. After this examination, successful students from the academic course begin a fifth year of study, and then sit for their General Certificate of Education (GCE) O-Level examination. Students who pass the GCE O-Level examination then compete for admission to either a junior college (for two years), a polytechnic³² (for three or four years) or a pre-university centre (for three years).

Finally, students who pass the GCE A-Level examination at the end of junior college Year 2 or pre-university Year 3, and students with very good results at the end of polytechnic Year 3 or Year 4, then compete for admission to a university, either the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University³³, the Singapore Management University (the nation’s first private university) or SIM University (also private).³⁴

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary* | Tertiary |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------|----------|
| Total enrolments | – | 256,801 | 253,913 | – |
| Total number of institutions | – | 173 | 183 | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | 13,318 | 16,544 | – |

* Includes 15 mixed-level schools and 13 junior colleges

2.23 Solomon Islands

Country education system

The Solomon Islands' Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development is responsible for developing policies, strategies and curriculum, national examinations, co-ordinating teacher training, teachers' salaries and operational grants.

School-based education was first introduced to Solomon Islands to provide skilled people to manage government activities, deliver services, provide trained workers for the private sector, and to promote the nation's religious values. It was, and in many ways continues to be, seen as a valued alternative to rural, village life.

At the pre-primary level, early childhood education is often community based. Children are taught by teachers who have gained a Certificate in Teaching from Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, or by other teachers who have completed a 'field-based training programme' (Solomon Islands Government, 2007).

Primary schooling commences with a preparatory programme delivered at primary schools, for children from about age six. After one year in the preparatory programme, children continue their primary schooling for another six years, from Standard 1 through to Standard 6, and are usually 12 when they finish primary school.

Junior secondary education runs from Form 1 to the end of Form 3, for students who are about 13 to 15. In senior secondary education, from Form 4 to Form 6, students are usually between 16 and 18 years of age. Secondary schooling builds on the subject knowledge already gained at primary school, and also prepares students for specialised skills training (Ibid).

Three types of secondary schools currently operate in Solomon Islands: national secondary schools; provincial secondary schools³⁵ (boarding schools), and community high schools, which students attend as day students, but which do also have some boarding capacity. However, all secondary students follow the same curriculum and sit for the same final examination at the end of Form 3.

There has been a rapid growth in the number of community high schools (which enrol 60 per cent of students) since they first opened in the early-1990s, in response to community support and interest. This demand has created many challenges for successive Solomon Islands' governments, in attempting to provide sufficient trained teachers and resources.

Community high schools are seen as a cost-effective alternative to residential boarding schools, and many parents appear to be more willing to enrol their daughters in these schools than at other secondary options, away from their homes and families. However, although many community high schools have expanded to offer classes to Form 4 and 5 levels, most students enrol in provincial or national schools to complete their secondary schooling.

The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education offers teacher-training, finance, nursing and secretarial studies, and a range of technical subjects such as marine and fisheries studies, forestry and agriculture. The college also offers some first-year university courses, in its role as a partner to the regional University of the South Pacific, which has a campus in Honiara, capital of Solomon Islands.

The gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined was 54.0 per cent in 2008 with a primary female-male ratio of 0.97:1 and a secondary female-male ratio of 0.84:1 (2007).³⁶

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 22,203 | 121,238 | 42,783 | 11,580 |
| Total number of institutions | 482 | 700 | 253 | 80+ |
| Total number of teachers | 1,167 | 4,806 | 1,654 | – |

2.24 South Africa

Country education system

Schooling in South Africa begins in Grade 0 (the reception year, also known as Grade R) and continues through to Grade 12. Grades 1 to 9 are classified as general education and training, and Grades 10 to 12 are considered as further education and training. After Grade 12, successful secondary students can apply to enter a tertiary education institution. The Foundation Phase is the first phase of the General Education and Training Band: (Grades R, 1, 2 and 3), and focuses on primary skills, knowledge and values to establish the foundation for further learning (Department of Basic Education South Africa, 2003).

Net enrolment ratios are 89.6 per cent for primary (2009) and 71.8 per cent for secondary with a gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined of 76.4 per cent (2007). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 31:1 and for secondary 25:1 (2009).

Education continues to receive the largest share of the country's budget, with an allocation of 165 billion rand (R) to the Departments of Basic Education (DBE) and Higher Education and Training in 2010/2011. Schooling is compulsory in South Africa between the ages of seven and fifteen, and primary and secondary schooling has reached near universal enrolment figures; in 2008, 98 per cent of children from seven to 13 years had access to education (UNESCO IBE, 2010e).

The DBE has identified specific targets to be achieved by 2014:

- increase the number of Grade 12 students who pass the national examinations and qualify to enter a bachelor's programme at a university from 105,000 to 175,000;
- increase the number of Grade 12 students who pass mathematics and physical science to 225,000 and 165,000, respectively;
- increase the percentage of learners in Grades 3, 6 and 9 in public schools who obtain 'acceptable level' national assessments for language and mathematics (or numeracy) to at least 60 per cent; and
- ensure that all children participate in a Grade R programme before entering Grade 1, and that at least 37 per cent of children aged up to five years participate in an early childhood development programme (South African Government Information, 2012).

The (current) outcomes-based education system followed in South Africa will be revised, improved and renamed *Schooling 2025* – a recent strategy of the South African government to improve the education system in areas such as teacher recruitment, student enrolments, school funding, mass literacy and numeracy.

In addition, the new curriculum approach is expected to give learners the option of 'learning in their mother tongues for the first three years of their schooling'. English will still be taught, but will not replace the mother tongue or home language in the early grades (Ibid).

The number of subjects will be reduced from eight to six for the intermediate phase, and in Grades 4–6, technology will be combined with science; and arts and culture, life orientation and economic and management sciences will only be taught to Grade 7 pupils (Ibid).

South Africa has 23 public universities, including two with specialist expertise and services in distance education, and six universities of technology. There are also 79 private higher education institutions registered with the South African Council of Higher Education, and in total, about 15 per cent of the relevant age group is enrolled in tertiary education.

The Generation of Leaders Discovered Peer Education Agency from South Africa was overall winner in the 2006 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The agency's project sought to identify and train young leaders to work to influence the behaviour of their peers in order to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic among young people.³⁷

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary* |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total enrolments | 756,822 | 7,024,368 | 4,471,468 | 1,320,366 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | 73 |
| Total number of teachers | – | 232,160 | 187,162 | 61,229 |

* Comprises both public higher education institutions (tertiary) and public vocational and continuing education and training (VCET) institutions; 'teachers' include management, lecturing and support staff

Source: Department of Basic Education South Africa (2012)

2.25 Sri Lanka

Country education system

Sri Lanka's present educational structure developed from the British system, introduced in the Nineteenth Century (Mysrilanka.com, 2012) when the colonial government established single-sex primary, lower secondary and higher secondary schools. In the late 1930s, education in government schools was made free of charge, and subsequently many government schools (named Maha Vidyalayas) were started. Three ministries share responsibility for education in Sri Lanka: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training.

Sri Lankan primary education currently lasts five years, and those pupils who pass their scholarship examination at the end of Grade 5 are admitted to the country's most popular schools, and provided with some financial support. Those pupils who do not pass the Grade 5 scholarship examination can continue their education, but at their own expense.

Four years of junior secondary education (Grades 6–9) follow primary education and then senior secondary is completed in Grades 10–13. At the end of Grade 11, students must sit for and pass their General Certificate of Education (GCE) O-Level, to be eligible to study for their GCE A-Levels, which determines their entry into a university. As universities have limited places, all the students who pass their A-Levels do not necessarily gain entry to a university.

Those secondary students who are unable to enrol in a university can either take a vocational technical course or seek employment. Another option for them is to enrol in courses as external students of Sri Lankan universities. The Open University of Sri Lanka, which was established in the early 1980s to provide part-time programmes, is supported by charging students tuition fees.

The language/medium of instruction and study in Sri Lankan schools today is either Sinhala or Tamil, and the student's first language and mathematics are compulsory subjects in both primary and secondary schooling.

Under the recently introduced Education Sector Development Framework and Programme, the priorities for education in Sri Lanka have been identified as:

- increasing equitable access to primary and secondary education;
- improving quality in primary and secondary education; and
- strengthening governance and service delivery of education.

Net primary enrolment in Sri Lanka is 95.1 per cent, with a female–male ratio of 1:1 and a pupil–teacher ratio of 23:1 (2009).³⁸

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 313,560 | 1,720,806 | 2,524,673 | 272,387 |
| Total number of institutions | – | 2,508 | 7,177 | 36* |
| Total number of teachers | – | 71,957 | 142,335 | 5,845 |

* Comprises 19 universities and 17 higher education institutes

2.26 St Kitts and Nevis

Country education system

St Kitts and Nevis inherited its education structure from Britain, and thus the country's original education system followed that of the earlier colonial administration. However, in 1967, St Kitts and Nevis' modern education system began, when the Ministry of Education introduced the 'comprehensive system of education'.

Today, education in St Kitts and Nevis is universal, compulsory from ages 5–16, and co-educational. Pre-schools cater for children who are three years old³⁹; after two years at pre-school, children move onto primary schools, which enrol students aged from ages 5–12.

Children are automatically promoted from primary to secondary school at 12, and normally finish their secondary education at sixteen. Some students do not complete their secondary education until 17 or 18 (the age of majority in the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis) (MoE St Kitts and Nevis, 2012).

Students who leave school at or before the fourth year of secondary education can enrol in skill-based programmes or institutions (such as at Project Strong), which are particularly applicable for those having difficulty in a more formal school setting. Other school leavers seek employment or develop more targeted and marketable skills at a post-secondary institution. They also have the choice to enrol in a programme at an Advanced Vocational Centre, or in the National Skills Training Programme.

Since late-2000, students of the Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College in St. Kitts, and in Sixth Form in Nevis have been able to complete the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)⁴⁰, a recently-introduced tertiary-level educational package designed to replace the traditional English-based General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-Level programme.⁴¹

Net enrolment ratios are 93.7 per cent for primary and 88.3 per cent for secondary (2009), and the gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 75.6 per cent (2007). The pupil-teacher ratio for primary is 14:1 and for secondary 10:1 (2009). Major, recent developments in education in St Kitts and Nevis include:

- a school transport system, which provides buses to take children to and from school at no cost to them;
- a teacher resource centre, which provides additional information and resources for teachers;
- providing computers in many primary and secondary schools;
- a student education learning fund project, for children of poorer parents;
- a special education unit to assist children with special needs;
- a dental programme which involves visiting government dentists;
- increased support for the University of the West Indies in teacher training; and
- a planning division within the Ministry of Education with responsibility for curriculum development and planning across all ministry programme areas.⁴²

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 1,605 | 6,334 | 4,270 | – |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | – | 102 | 443 | 441 |

2.27 St Lucia

Country education system

The first organised system of education in St Lucia began in 1838, with churches mainly responsible for providing the early schools. Subsequently, the churches began working with the government to provide wider education in St Lucia.

In 1985, St Lucia's Ministry of Education began to offer pre-primary programmes to prepare children for their primary schooling. This resulted, by 1998, in close to 80 per cent of St Lucia's three to five year olds attending pre-schools or daycare centres (MoE, HRD and Labour St Lucia, 2012).

Compulsory education begins at five, and comprises a three-year infant programme, followed by four years of primary instruction. At the end of the sixth grade, students take the Common Entrance Examination (CEE) to decide where they will complete their secondary schooling.

Currently, there are 73 public primary schools and 23 public secondary schools in St Lucia. Net enrolment ratios are 93.1 per cent for primary (2009) and 79.6 per cent for secondary (2008), and the gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined is 75.3 per cent (2009). The pupil-teacher ratio for primary is 20:1 and for secondary 16:1 (2009).⁴³ In 2010–11 public spending on education represented 5 per cent of the nation's GDP.

With a goal of reducing its reliance on the agricultural and tourism industries, during the 1980s and 1990s, St Lucia's Ministry of Education sought to provide universal primary education to all of its citizens. As well as making education more accessible, the ministry developed strategies to alleviate overcrowding in schools and to improve school buildings and resources.

Because the 1999 Saint Lucia Education Act meant that all students had to remain in school until they turned 15, those who did not attend a secondary school were originally placed in a three-year senior primary programme, to prepare them for work and perhaps another opportunity to enrol in a secondary school. However, with the introduction of the Universal Secondary School programme (2006–07), the government's goal is to offer every student an opportunity for a secondary education.

Secondary school graduates who are successful in the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)⁴⁴ examination can enrol at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, St Lucia's main tertiary institution. Here they can choose from a range of academic and vocational courses, and students who want to complete a full bachelor's degree can do this through online studies, or complete their tertiary studies overseas. St Lucia also shares responsibility with other Caribbean nations for the regional University of the West Indies.⁴⁵

The Government of St Lucia's current education sector priorities include communication and technology enhancements, improving the quality of teaching in schools, promoting literacy and quality assuring courses delivered at the country's institutions.⁴⁶

Statistical overview*

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 3,423 | 17,982 | 15,255 | 4,749 |
| Total number of institutions | 92 | 73 | 23 | 5 |
| Total number of teachers | 330 | 998 | 963 | 165 |

*Data is for 2010/11

2.28 St Vincent and the Grenadines

Country education system

The St Vincent and the Grenadines education system provides 11 years of compulsory education, starting at age five. This has resulted in net enrolment ratios in 2005 of 90 per cent for primary and 64 per cent for secondary students – and a gross enrolment ratio for all levels combined of 69 per cent.

The government has ‘recognised the importance of education to poverty alleviation, economic competitiveness and social development’ (European Commission, 2008). An Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) has been developed, following extensive consultation, and seeks to resolve challenges and weaknesses across all education system sub-sectors.

The ESDP (2002–2007) prioritises institutional development and management reform, as well as aiming to achieve quality education, and better access to schooling at all levels.

Both the Education Act of 1992 and 2006, and the ESDP, recognise that to be successful, learners need to be actively involved in the learning process, and the government seeks to implement this goal through the country’s National Curriculum and Assessment Framework (NCAF).

The NCAF involves a shift in curriculum integration to include differentiated learning strategies in the classroom. Particular attention has been paid to the development of learning outcomes to ensure that ‘progression and continuity is maintained as students pass from grade to grade, and from primary to secondary level’ (UNESCO IBE, 2007b).

With the implementation of the Universal Secondary Education programme (2005), the inclusive education approach has been adjusted, so that students who turn 11 at the beginning of, or during, the academic year, are able to enrol at a secondary school.

Net enrolment ratios are 98.3 per cent for primary (2009) and 90.3 per cent for secondary (2007) with a primary female–male ratio of 0.93:1 and a secondary female–male ratio of 1.04:1 (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 17:1 and for secondary 13:1 (2009).⁴⁷

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 11,704 | 14,909 | 10,595 | 2,925 |
| Total number of institutions | 127 | 68 | 27 | – |
| Total number of teachers | 378 | 879 | 794 | 886 |

2.29 Uganda

Country education system

Uganda's education system consists of seven years of primary education, followed by four years of lower secondary and two years of upper secondary schooling, after which there is the potential for students to undertake between two and five years of tertiary education. A two-year pre-primary stage is available to three to five year olds, before they enrol in a primary school.

The net enrolment ratios are 92.3 per cent for primary (2009) and 21.2 per cent for secondary (2007) with a gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined of 66.8 per cent (2009). The pupil–teacher ratio for primary is 49:1 and for secondary 18:1 (2009).

The Ministry of Education and Sports, with separate ministers of state for primary education, higher education and sports, is responsible for the country's education services. Recent changes have meant that the Ugandan public service, including the education sector, has adopted a decentralised structure, with most of the authority and resources now devolved to districts. This is intended to provide 'a more accountable and responsive provision of basic services to the population' (SACMEQ, 2012e).

As a result, although systemic policy and quality assurance has remained the responsibility of the central administration (through its role in teacher education, curriculum and examinations), operational management is now the responsibility of each district administration. This model is intended to enhance flexibility, transparency and accountability, and to allow local administrators to 'be more creative in seeking solutions to local challenges and problems' (Ibid).

The government also works closely with a non-government education sector 'umbrella' body, the Forum for Education, to enhance access, equity, quality, relevance and efficiency in the sector, particularly in providing services for disadvantaged children.⁴⁸

Uganda's public universities are Makerere University, the Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Gulu University, Kyambogo University and Busitema University. Private universities include Busoga University, the Islamic University in Uganda, Kampala International University, the Uganda Christian University and the Uganda Martyrs University.

Uganda's main priority for the education sector over the next few years is to 'provide for, support, guide, co-ordinate, regulate and promote quality education and sports to all persons in Uganda for national integration, individual and national development'.⁴⁹

The nation expects to meet this key priority through:

- achieving relevant quality education at all levels;
- enhancing equitable access to education by all school-age children and young people; and
- ensuring efficient and effective delivery of education through information and communication technologies. (UNICEF, 2012).

The net enrolment ratio for primary school boys is currently 91 per cent, while it is slightly higher at 94 per cent for girls. Secondary school net enrolment ratios are 22 per cent, and 21 per cent, respectively.

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Total enrolments | 508,617 | 8,022,540 | 1,258,084 | 120,097 |
| Total number of institutions | 7,368 | 21,120 | 4,000 | 320 |
| Total number of teachers | 13,898 | 172,403 | 47,194 | 11,041 |

2.30 United Kingdom

Country education system

More than 90% (approximately 8.5 million) of students attend one of the 30,000 publicly-funded state schools in England and Wales; in Scotland, 770,000 children attend about 5,000 schools, including pre-schools and other special education schools; and in Northern Ireland 350,000 children are enrolled in 1,300 state schools. Primary schools usually include both girls and boys as pupils, while secondary schools may be either single-sex or co-educational.

Education departments in England and Wales fund their schools through a Local Education Authority although LEA funding is being replaced by conversion of schools to 'academies' directly funded by central government, and in some cases backed by a private sponsor. In Northern Ireland, schools are largely financed from public funds through five Education and Library Boards. In Scotland, the organisation and staffing of early childhood education and care, primary education and secondary education are the responsibility of local authorities, which receive government funding and local tax revenues. They make their own decisions about the proportion of their funding to spend on education.

All children in England, Scotland and Wales between 5 and 16 must receive a full-time education, while in Northern Ireland, children must begin school at four years of age. For children under five, publicly-funded nurseries and pre-schools are available for a limited number of hours each week. After the age of 16, students can attend sixth form colleges or other further education institutions. Both options offer general education courses in addition to more specific vocational or applied subjects.

In 1992, England introduced a National Curriculum⁵⁰ to which state schools are required to adhere - until their students turn 16. This curriculum is currently under review with the outcomes to be published in 2013.

The *Education and Skills Act of 2008* increased the age at which people in England must remain in either education or training from 16 to 18, effective in 2013 for 17 year-olds and in 2015 for 18 year-olds.

School learning is separated into four key stages, which relate to the curriculum:

- *National curriculum core subjects for 5 to 11 year olds (Key stages 1 and 2) include:* English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography, art and design, music, physical education. schools also teach religious education and are encouraged to offer personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, and at least one Modern foreign language.
- *National curriculum core subjects for 11 to 14 year olds (Key stage 3) include:* English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography, modern foreign languages, art and design, music, citizenship, physical education. schools at stage 3 also have to provide careers education and guidance (during Year 9), sex and relationship education (SRE), religious education. Throughout Key stages 1–3, pupils are routinely tested in Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) but these are being phased out.
- *At Key stage 4 – General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) students have to take* English, mathematics, science, it, citizenship and physical education. The GCSE is a single-subject examination set and marked by independent boards. Students usually take up to ten (there is no upper or lower limit) GCSE examinations in different subjects, including Mathematics and English language.

After taking GCSEs, students may currently leave secondary schooling; alternatively, they may choose to continue their education at vocational or technical colleges, or they may take a higher level of secondary school examinations known as AS-Levels after an additional year of study. A-Levels (Advanced Level) may be taken after two years of study.

Scotland has its own qualification framework that is separate from that of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is the national accreditation and awarding body in Scotland, which has responsibility for national qualifications at all levels (below degree level) offered in schools, colleges and some higher education institutions. It also approves and quality assures awarding bodies that plan to enter people for SQA qualifications.

Scotland's qualifications system is changing to meet the needs of learners in the 21st century. Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) is the 3-18 curriculum in Scotland which offers a broad and deep general education from early years (aged 3) through to the end of S3 (typically age 15). It includes a senior phase of education (typically 15-18) which provides opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work and obtain qualifications. The idea behind the new qualifications is to build on the strengths of the existing system and help all children gain both knowledge and skills for learning, life and work by the time they leave school. The main changes include:

- National 4 and 5 qualifications – to replace Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications in the current system from 2013/14;
- Formal recognition of literacy and numeracy through new qualification systems – as Units within English and mathematics courses and as a stand-alone option

Since 2006, the SQA has been engaging with partners, stakeholders and the teaching profession on the policy, design and development of the qualifications.

Approximately 1.8 million students are currently enrolled in the UK higher education system, while about one third of young people go on to higher education at age 18, and an increasing number of 'mature' students are studying either full-time or part-time for university degrees. Undergraduate degrees take three years to complete in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, while at Scottish universities they last four years. At the graduate level, a Master's degree is normally earned in a single year, a Research Master's degree takes two years and a Doctoral degree is often completed in three years. Professional courses, such as Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Law and Teaching, are undertaken usually as five-year undergraduate degrees.⁵¹

In Scotland, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning has overall responsibility for Scottish education. The Scottish Government Directorates for Learning (SGLD), for Children & Families (SGC&FD) and for Employability, Skills and Lifelong Learning (SGESLLD) are the key bodies implementing the relevant policies.

Since 2010, government education in the United Kingdom has become the responsibility of two departments: the Department for Education (DfE), responsible for early and school years education (including statutory responsibilities for the rights of the child, etc.) and the Business Innovation and Skills Ministry (BIS) which has primary responsibility for both vocational and higher education. Of the departments previously responsible for education from 2007: the Department for Innovation Universities and Science was abolished, and the Department for Children, Schools and Families was renamed the DfE.⁵²

Statistical overview

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total enrolments | 1,121,699 | 4,416,474 | 5,429,636 | 2,415,222 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | – | – |
| Total number of teachers | 59,513 | 245,879 | – | 137,950 |

2.31 United Republic of Tanzania

Country education system

Education policy and co-ordination in the Tanzanian Mainland is the responsibility of its Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. Education in Zanzibar is administrated by its Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (UNESCO IBE, 2010f). The following refers to the Mainland, as the initiatives submitted to the guidebook relate to there.

Formal education and training in the Tanzanian Mainland comprises two years of pre-primary education, seven years of primary education, four years of junior secondary (ordinary level), two years of senior secondary (advanced level), and up to three or more years of tertiary education.

Tanzania Mainland's bilingual policy requires children to learn both Kiswahili and English at secondary school. English, taught as a compulsory subject at primary level, is considered essential by the nation's educators, as it is the language which links Tanzania to the world through technology, commerce and administration; while the learning of Kiswahili enables Tanzania's students to keep in touch with their cultural values and heritage (Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, 2012).

Tanzania Mainland's education sector reforms began in 1995, when an early focus was on ensuring increased and equitable access to high-quality formal education and adult literacy, through expanding facilities, increasing efficiency, and improving quality. The 1997 Basic Education Master Plan included an action plan for transferring responsibility to local school committees, and a pilot project for decentralisation was introduced in 37 local authorities.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training manages overall systemic administration of education. It had already decentralised primary education, and secondary education was also decentralised recently: 'By decentralising secondary education, the movement of teachers from secondary schools to the ministerial headquarters will be unnecessary and therefore individual follow-up costs by individual teachers will be reduced as they will now need to report to the local authority.' (Ibid).

At the tertiary level, planning and service delivery are the responsibility of the institutions themselves, through governing councils. University education is provided in state and private universities, and 41 teachers' colleges provide teacher education at diploma and Grade A levels. Diploma trainees study courses to prepare them to teach in secondary schools while Grade A graduates can teach in primary and pre-primary schools. The colleges also provide in-service training for teachers who wish to upgrade their skills and qualifications, through both residential and distance learning delivery modes (SACMEQ, 2012d).

The government intends gradually to change its role to one where it encourages the private sector to increase its investment in education. From this expansion, it is expected that the sector's investment will help to establish an enhanced learning environment.

Public spending on education was 6.8 per cent of GDP in 2007. The net enrolment ratio for primary is 96.7 per cent with a primary female–male ratio of 1:1 and a pupil–teacher ratio of 54:1 (2009). The gross enrolment ratio for all levels of education combined was 56.6 per cent in 2008.⁵³

Statistical overview⁵⁴

| | Pre-primary | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary ⁵⁵ |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|
| Total enrolments | 873,981 | 8,410,000 | 1,164,250 | 82,428 |
| Total number of institutions | – | – | 1083 | – |
| Total number of teachers | 16,957 | 154,895 | 32,835 | – |

Part II COUNTRY INITIATIVES

Chapter 3

Introduction

3.1 Commonwealth country initiatives by focus area

For this guidebook, Commonwealth countries submitted many worthwhile, innovative and replicable education initiatives, of which 64 have been included. For ease of reference, the guidebook's compilers have assigned a primary and a secondary theme to all initiatives selected for publication: access, alternative, devolution, equity, management, quality, resources.

These seven themes are explained in more detail below, and were only determined after assessing all the initiatives submitted. From this analysis, clear sector priorities, and thus identifiable themes, emerged.

Each contributing country has also identified a specific education sector issue (and often additional sector issues) that their initiative seeks to address. These are often very specific to a particular country, region or sector, and represent the participating country's own perception of their initiative.

The table below not only summarises all initiatives by theme, but also serves to illustrate the very broad range of initiatives included in the guidebook:

Table 3.1 Commonwealth country initiatives by focus area

| Level | Primary Theme | Secondary Theme |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Access | 14 | 16 |
| Alternative | 12 | 6 |
| Devolution | 3 | 5 |
| Equity | 4 | 9 |
| Management | 8 | 8 |
| Quality | 20 | 12 |
| Resources | 3 | 8 |
| | 64 | 64 |

3.2 Definitions of focus areas

The range of initiatives submitted by Commonwealth countries represents great diversity. The seven themes identified above and used as the basis for allocation of a particular initiative will represent different concepts, not only to the many diverse education systems represented by Commonwealth countries, but also to individuals.

However, for the purposes of the guidebook, the following definitions⁵⁶ have been used:

Access to education is the opportunity for an individual to experience and participate in a structured education or training programme.

Alternative describes an education setting, programme, or school that is non-traditional, especially in educational approach, ideals, methods of teaching, or curriculum.

Devolution exists in education where power and responsibility have been redistributed to the local, provincial, or regional level, from central or national management, in some (or all) aspects of service delivery.

Equity in the education setting is the right of all students to have access to classes, facilities, and educational programmes, irrespective of their race, gender, disability, first language, or other characteristic.

Management in education relates to a range of schooling levels and hierarchies, and describes the framework or structures within which a system, sector or individual schools are administered.

Quality refers to the relative 'fitness for purpose' of an institution, system, programme, project, or curriculum and its ability to achieve positive outcomes; its measurement is usually based on the ability of an institution to fulfil its mission, or to achieve a programme's aims.

Resources are equipment, persons or funding which (in the education sector) contribute to positive and beneficial education results and outcomes.

Initiatives have been listed alphabetically by their titles in the pages which follow. The matrix below can be used as a quick reference for guidebook users to locate initiatives with a similar primary (or secondary) theme.

3.3 Methodology

This guidebook represents the education initiatives Commonwealth countries would like to showcase. All Commonwealth countries' ministries of education were invited to submit entries. They were asked to identify each initiative's aim, goal, outputs and outcomes, as well as its theme. They were also asked to say who the initiative was targeted at, and what specific issue it addressed. Along with a brief summary of the initiative, they were asked to sum up the successes and challenges of implementing it, and to provide advice on how other countries might approach adapting it to their context. As much as possible, the text provided by the respondent in each country has been retained, although it has been adapted so that all initiatives are presented in a similar format. The respondent in each country was asked to check the text before it was finalised. Contact details are provided for further information on each initiative.

Chapter 4

Country Initiatives

4.1 Access to education, through partnerships with the private sector, Cameroon

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Opportunities for education |
| Other issues addressed | Improved efficiency in delivery Equity in education Increased professionalisation Increased variety of study programmes |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary Tertiary Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Making education accessible to all, as well as increasing the range of education services available.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date include:

- (a) better variety in programmes on offer;
- (b) greater choice for students and pupils;
- (c) improved enrolments; and
- (d) distances to school shortened.

Outcomes: Outcomes identified to date include more positive attitudes by parents, as they can now get their children to pursue the trades they desire for them, sometimes without even having to cover long distances.

The Cameroon government acknowledges that alone it is incapable of meeting the needs of providing schools and universities. Therefore, it is encouraging the private sector to play an important role in meeting the heavy demand.

In the past seven years, private education has gained ground at all levels in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary. Private education is prepared to provide support where the government is unable to meet the needs of the community. In vocational training, and also in higher education, programmes are offered by private institutions. Although it is more expensive, it adequately addresses the needs of the population. (The government pays no subsidies to the private institutions delivering education services.)

Implementation and challenges

Cameroon faces overcrowding in classrooms, overdependence on the government and a shortage of places to meet demand. To remedy these challenges, the government has enacted a law on private education; and so the process and procedure for creating private institutions has been made easier. The government has also enacted mechanisms intended

to stimulate the creation of new establishments; there are also new mechanisms for quality assurance and to establish a supervisory authority.

Non-legitimate education establishments still exist and are shut down once discovered. A related challenge lies in the recruitment of unqualified teachers by private establishments, an issue which is dealt with by regular institutional inspections.

More positive attitudes are being shown by parents who can now encourage their children to complete courses for eventual employment, sometimes without having to travel long distances to undertake their studies.

The major priorities for advancing education in Cameroon in the future, and achieving its goal of access for all, are:

- improving retention rates and eliminating social inequalities;
- improving the quality of service delivery; and
- encouraging private sector participation.

Further information

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
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4.2 Apprenticeship scheme, Mauritius

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Increasing access to and improving relevance of training Private-public partnerships – increased industry participation in training |
| Other issues addressed | Addressing the challenges faced by the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector |
| Level of initiative | Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Industry |

Initiative aims

Goal: Greater access to education, improved quality and increased relevance of technical and vocational education and training.

Objectives: Improve employability and eliminate the mismatch between training and the demands of industry.

Outputs: There has been greater involvement of industries in the apprenticeship scheme. Currently the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) is working with a network of around 150 enterprises on this project, and more than 1,000 apprentices are enrolled every year to follow courses under the scheme – representing 30 per cent of total pre-employment training.

Outcomes: High rates of employment have been identified among ex-apprentices (78 per cent in 2011) as revealed by tracer studies conducted six months after the completion of training programmes. The figure shows that apprenticeship training contributes to enhancing the employability of young people. The survey of employers conducted on a yearly basis confirmed that employers are highly satisfied with the job performance of ex-apprentices. The training of supervisors' programmes has helped to bring about a positive change in attitudes of supervisors engaged in apprenticeship training. Apprenticeship training has led to a new work culture, orientated towards learning through sharing at the workplace.

The apprenticeship scheme was introduced in 1996 to promote apprenticeship training and widen access to training. The scheme has various advantages over centre-based training such as:

- training costs are low;
- training is more relevant to industry needs;
- apprentices are eligible for payment of a monthly stipend to encourage them to enrol in training under the scheme; and
- the incentive also contributes to the integration of, and access by, needy students.

Participating apprentices should be older than 16 years; they normally spend four days each week in an enterprise to acquire work experience, and one day in an MITD training centre for theoretical and technological back-up. Apprentices undergo block release (two weeks' duration), centre-based training at the start of the apprenticeship to enable them to develop the basic initial skills required for engaging effectively in the on-the-job training.

Apprenticeship training is especially focused on the unemployed who have left the education system and who seek to enter the labour market, but are unskilled.

Generally, the period of apprenticeship lasts for one to two years, and leads to the National Trade Certificate or National Certificate, depending on the trade. The conditions of apprenticeship training are governed by a contract which is signed by the employer and the apprentice (or their responsible party).

The apprenticeship scheme gained momentum after the introduction of financial incentives in 2000 for employers participating in the scheme. The financial incentive contributed to motivating employers to engage actively in training under the scheme's activities – for the shared benefits of the industries, apprentices, and society. Skilling of supervisors has been conducted to ensure proper on-the-job training for apprentices.

Apprenticeship training represents around 30 per cent of pre-employment training in Mauritius, thus leading to increased access to training of youngsters who were largely 'dropouts' from mainstream education. The high employment rate of apprentices shows that apprenticeship training definitely helps young people to integrate into the world of work more smoothly. Furthermore, the apprenticeship scheme is the preferred mode of training in the hospitality sector, which is one of the pillars of the Mauritian economy.

Implementation and challenges

The MITD, originally called the Industrial and Vocational Training Board, is responsible for conducting apprenticeship training. In 1996, MITD launched the apprenticeship scheme in five trades, involving a total enrolment of 134 apprenticeships.

Currently, because of the many different initiatives implemented to expand the scheme, MITD is offering apprenticeship training through the scheme in a total of 22 trades – involving an overall enrolment of more than 1,000 apprentices (excluding in-house apprenticeship training conducted by employers).

The MITD has identified 69 apprenticeable trades which have the potential to provide training under the apprenticeship scheme. The MITD acts as a facilitator and monitors the on-the-job training process. Presently, National Certificates at Levels III and IV on the National Qualifications Framework scale are being offered under the scheme.

An overarching, tripartite apprenticeship committee is mandated to:

- investigate any dispute arising out of a contract referred to it and endeavour to settle it amicably;
- approve the extension of the term of any apprenticeship when the extension is in the interest of the apprentice;
- approve the reduction of the duration of apprenticeship where the apprenticeship committee is satisfied that the apprentice has already reached a high level of training; and
- enquire into any matter relating to apprenticeship, in any trade or industry.

Apprentices are paid a monthly allowance by employers, which is equivalent to 40 to 60 per cent of the minimum wage. From 2000, employers were reimbursed by the (previous) Institutional Vocational Training Board, and since 2004 by the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), for 50 per cent of the qualifying expenses (apprentice wages and overheads) incurred by the employer.

The MITD is responsible for assuring the quality of the apprenticeship training, through close monitoring of on-the-job training, while the Mauritius Qualifications Authority is responsible for quality assurance of training programmes offered under this scheme.

One of the major challenges faced by the scheme's organisers was to motivate industries to participate in apprenticeship training. However, to resolve this problem, sensitisation campaigns were carried out with the different associations and groupings of local industries. To further encourage employer participation, the government provides financial incentives, under the levy grant incentive scheme, to employers participating in apprenticeship training.

A second major challenge was ensuring quality on-the-job training. To address this challenge, the MITD organised a number of training sessions with supervisors who were working in relevant industries, to provide them with the necessary skills to coach apprentices. During their training process, a logbook was introduced to assist in the monitoring of on-the-job training.

The third challenge has been a (relatively) high dropout rate among apprentices. To contain this problem, apprentices are paid a higher stipend in the second year of apprenticeship to encourage them to complete their training programme.

For other countries considering establishing a similar apprenticeship programme, Mauritius educators advise that it is important to set up a proper incentive package for employers – to motivate them to participate in apprenticeship training. Training of supervisors is essential for ensuring quality on-the-job training, and it is equally important to establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure quality assurance measures, while the legal implications have to be examined carefully to establish clearly the responsibilities of all parties.

Further information

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
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4.3 Assessment and recognition of foreign credentials for the teaching profession, Canada

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Pan-Canadian teacher mobility |
| Other issues addressed | Enhance teacher mobility between Canadian provinces and territories Facilitate the integration of foreign-educated teachers into the Canadian labour market |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Allow a teacher certified in one Canadian province or territory to receive a teaching certificate in any other province/territory.

Objectives: To provide teacher certification registrars in all Canadian provinces and territories assurance that teachers certified in all jurisdictions meet the highest standards of qualifications.

Outputs: Enhanced labour mobility, and enhanced certification processes for foreign-educated teachers.

Outcomes: These initiatives have significantly enhanced the experience of certified teachers who move from one Canadian province or territory to another.

In Canada, issues related to teacher education and certification are under the jurisdiction of individual provinces and territories, which has led to variations in the types of teaching certificates available. The initiatives will facilitate the movement of teachers to areas that may face labour shortages.

They will also ensure that teachers certified in one Canadian province or territory, including foreign-educated professionals, can receive a teaching certificate in any other, without being required to take additional courses. For foreign-educated teachers, the implementation of the Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials will mean that there will be equivalent requirements across the country.

Implementation and challenges

Registrars for teacher certification in all provinces and territories exchange information with regard to international teacher-education institutions. The registrars are also looking at areas where establishing common requirements and practices are possible. When considering implementing a similar programme elsewhere, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, recommends ensuring continued communication between teacher-certification registrars in order to carry out such initiatives successfully.

Further information

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Name | Council of Ministers of Education, Canada |
| Email | Various; refer CMEC website – www.cmec.ca/11/About/index.html |
| Postal address | 95 St Clair Avenue West, Suite 1106, Toronto ON M4V 1N6, Canada |
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4.4 Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), Australia

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | A positive start to life |
| Other issues addressed | Quality of a child's earliest environments Availability of appropriate experiences at the right stages of development |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Early childhood, health and community service government agencies (federal, state and local), non-government organisations, service providers |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Provide data to inform policy and service delivery so that governments and communities can develop and reorient services and systems to improve the health, well-being and early learning of young children.
- Outputs:** The 2009 AEDI implementation provided Australia with the first comprehensive and holistic national picture of how young children are faring in almost every community across the country. It showed that while the majority of Australian children are doing well, almost one in four (23.6 per cent) children start school developmentally vulnerable in at least one domain, and just over 10 per cent on two or more domains (11.8 per cent). It also showed the variations across states and even more, across communities.
- Governments, communities and families now have access to a wealth of publically available information through the AEDI website⁵⁷ including:
- (a) a 2009 national AEDI report which provides an overview of the results at national and state/territory level;
 - (b) AEDI community maps which provide a geographic representation of the data collected, including the number and proportion of children in the local community who are on track, those at risk and those developmentally vulnerable on each of the AEDI domains;
 - (c) AEDI community profiles containing important information about early childhood development outcomes using community-level AEDI results and contextual information, including population demographics for the whole community; and
 - (d) AEDI school profiles available to school principals showing the results for children attending their school, so that principals and early years' teachers can use this information to inform planning, better prepare for the children entering their school and develop school–community partnerships.
- Outcomes:** Since the results first became available in December 2009, governments (at all levels) and community organisations have been using the data to:
- (a) inform early childhood development policy and practice such as transition to school or reading and literacy programmes;
 - (b) create partnerships across education, health and community services; and
 - (c) develop or refine community based initiatives, such as young parents groups, mobile playgroups, parent workshops, community forums and partnerships.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)⁵⁸ is a population-based measure of young children's development which shows how children are faring in the years before they reach school. It provides governments and communities with comprehensive and holistic information to inform early years policy and service delivery.

The AEDI provides a measure of children's development at the time they start school in five key areas of early childhood development (or domains) – physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills and communication skills and general knowledge. All of these areas are important and are considered predictors of good adult health, education and social outcomes.

By providing governments and communities with the evidence they need to inform early years' policy and planning, the AEDI can help ensure children arrive at school better prepared to engage effectively in the education system. Experts know from previous research that there are children who are at risk of not making a successful transition to school, and the gap between these children and their peers increases progressively.

While the AEDI provides information about the early years, it is also a vital tool for schools, in that it can be used to:

- strengthen links with community partners, early years education and care services, local government agencies, health centres, libraries and other local organisations, and encourage them to explore new ways of working together; and
- reflect on the development of children entering school and inform early years planning and curriculum development.

Implementation and challenges

The AEDI is an Australian government initiative, led by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) working in close partnership with state and territory agencies (especially education departments) and two leading Australian research organisations (the Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth).

The 2009 (initial) national implementation of the AEDI was a response to the need for more comprehensive early childhood data, to underpin the Australian government's early childhood reform agenda. Australia's National Early Childhood Development Strategy – Investing in the early years (Australian Government, 2009a) – also recognises the need to build a solid evidence base as one of its six reform priority areas.

Prior to the 2009 national implementation, Australia did not have access to such comprehensive and nationally consistent population-based information about its young children. The results from the 2009 AEDI are now providing a wealth of information which is being used to influence early childhood initiatives at the community, state and national levels, as well as inform early childhood policy development.

The commitment to ongoing national data collections every three years is recognition of the importance of this data and its continued relevance to governments and community organisations. Without ongoing collections Australia would not be able to:

- ask questions around what is working well and what needs to be improved;
- have access to up-to-date information on young children;
- support the growth and maintenance of partnerships that have already developed, across education, health and community services; and
- have a national progress measure of early childhood development (as endorsed by the Council of Australian governments).

AEDI is a measure of how young children are developing in different communities. This information helps schools, communities and governments to pinpoint the types of services,

resources and support that young children and their families need to give children the best possible start in life.

The AEDI provides information on young children's development across five key areas (or domains):

- (a) physical health and well-being: whether a child is healthy, independent, ready for school each day;
- (b) social competence: whether a child is self-confident, gets along with others and shares, how a child plays;
- (c) emotional maturity: whether a child is able to concentrate, help others, is patient, not aggressive or angry;
- (d) language and cognitive skills: whether a child is interested in reading and writing, can count and recognise numbers and shapes; and
- (e) communication skills and general knowledge: whether a child can tell a story, communicate with adults and children, articulate themselves.

Teachers of children in their first year of full-time school collect the AEDI data by completing a checklist based on their knowledge of each child in their class. Information is entered into a secure web-based data entry system and children are not required to be present. To implement the AEDI, schools are provided with funding for teacher relief to enable teachers to complete the checklists (20 minutes per checklist plus one hour professional development).

The AEDI has been adapted to ensure it is culturally inclusive and appropriate for use with indigenous children. Teachers are also encouraged to complete the AEDI checklist with an indigenous cultural consultant, if available, to bring unique cultural knowledge relating to the child.

While the AEDI is completed by teachers, results are reported for the communities where children live, *not* where they go to school. The results show proportions of children 'on track', 'developmentally at risk' and 'developmentally vulnerable' – in the five AEDI domains identified above.

In 2009 the AEDI was completed nationwide for the first time. AEDI Checklists were completed for 261,147 children (97.5 per cent of the estimated five-year-old population) across Australia. This involved 15,522 teachers from 7,422 government, Catholic and independent schools (95.6 per cent of schools with eligible children). The second AEDI data collection is being undertaken between 1 May and 31 July 2012, with results to be released in 2013. Based on 2009 figures, it is expected that data will be collected on more than 270,000 children across Australia. Similar implementation timelines are expected for future implementations (2015, 2018, etc.)

The AEDI implementation team in DEEWR note that rolling out a national initiative, collecting data on all children in their first year of full time school is challenging, given the vast distances, state and regional variations, and significant remote areas in Australia. To achieve their aims, DEEWR has worked closely with state/territory colleagues to develop a national approach that has flexibility to accommodate jurisdictional differences and provided funding and other incentives to promote participation in the programme as well as use of the AEDI results.

While teachers complete the AEDI checklist for students in their class, the information collected largely reflects what the children encountered in the years prior to starting school. As such, it was important in engaging schools (and other education sector bodies) in understanding the benefits of the AEDI and why teachers were being asked to complete the checklist.

To enhance schools' engagement with the AEDI, co-ordinators were employed in every state and territory to work directly with schools and other key stakeholders, such as teachers

unions. In addition, as noted above, teacher relief was offered to reimburse schools for the time taken to complete the checklist. This, along with strong messaging around the value of the AEDI to schools, communities and governments, made it possible to achieve the very high completion rate for the first national collection in 2009. A similar approach has been adopted for the 2012 data collection.

Further information

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4.5 Better Communication Research Programme, United Kingdom

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Provision for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Parents Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Provide for children and young people with significant speech, language and communication needs (SLCN.)
- Outputs:** A series of research reports have been produced or are in their final stage of completion; ‘What Works’, a communication-supporting classroom observation tool⁵⁹ and a resource analysis, has been created and will be translated into a web-based resource. The Warwick University Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research (CEDAR) facility also contributed actively to the UK National Year of Communication in 2011 (through national conferences) and to the Communication Council which operated over this period.
- Outcomes:** The Better Communication Research Programme (BCRP) has contributed to the development of a specific and sustained consideration of the requirements of children and young people with SLCN and to the development of services to meet their needs. This includes the support of parents and professionals to which CEDAR’s research and dissemination have contributed.

The United Kingdom (UK) government recently commissioned a review of provision for children and young people with SLCN. Warwick University’s CEDAR undertook research in support of the review. The government accepted the review’s recommendations in full, and CEDAR was commissioned to undertake research as part of the Better Communication Action Plan.

Implementation and challenges

Collaboratively with partner organisations, CEDAR led the BCRP 2009–12, which comprised a series of related research programmes. The interim results have been presented in two reports and at three national conferences during the UK National Year of Communication in 2011. Final reports are currently being prepared for publication by the UK Department for Education (DfE).

The BCRP has demonstrated:

- a coherent, comprehensive research programme led by a core team and specialists, with researchers specific to each project;
- active engagement with practitioners, including speech and language therapists; key voluntary and community sector bodies (including the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, the Association for All Speech Impaired Children (Afasic), Communication Trust);
- a national UK expert steering group with international experts as ‘critical friends’;
- active continuous/frequent engagement with the department for education; and

- continuing feedback of results during the programme, wherever possible, to allow responses to the developing research base.

The main challenges faced by the initiative concerned focus and scale. SLCN is a problematic concept as it is approached in two different ways in the UK: (a) specifically, to include children and young people with *primary* SLCN; and (b) to include a wider group with *secondary* SLCN (i.e., where these needs arise from another primary difficulty such as substantial hearing impairment or intellectual disability).

As a result, researchers had to produce a *programme*, not a single *project*. CEDAR was commissioned to develop this in consultation with the DfE and practitioners in the field. Hence, the programme was organic, developing over its lifetime, but needing also to maintain the confidence of the SLCN professional community, parents and the DfE. Moreover, one study suffered from problems in the National Health Service (NHS) with respect to research: governance procedures resulted in delays in starting one of the CEDAR projects (on children who stammer).

It is planned that, working with the DfE, voluntary bodies and others, the research will be used:

- to develop policy on the special educational needs system nationally and locally, with an emphasis on needs rather than diagnostic category;
- to develop pedagogy, by access to reviews of effectiveness of interventions and of classroom environments and pedagogy that supports communication; and
- to benefit children from better identification of their needs and more appropriately targeted and evaluated interventions.

CEDAR personnel advise that a research programme of this type and size requires a high level of expertise, not only in research *per se* but also in professional and policy experience. To achieve this, a core team of four, plus a specialist team of four professors, and seven co-investigators from five universities, was established. The CEDAR team also found that continuous engagement with the programme funder (DfE) was essential to ensure the research direction was acceptable and that results are disseminated widely, to optimise their impact.

Further information

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4.6 Bridging the Gap programme, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Equity |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Transition between pre-primary and primary stages |
| Other issues addressed | To ensure the successful completion of primary schooling |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** The Bridging the Gap programme involves a one-term coaching of five-year old children who join Standard I of the primary schooling cycle to allow them to make the transition slowly and harmoniously from the informal learning of pre-school (or the home) to the formal learning of the primary cycle.
- Objectives:** To ensure that new entrants in the primary sector are on an equal footing in terms of acquired basic competencies and skills before embarking on the primary learning path.
- Outputs:** It has been noted that pupils adapted happily to a new school environment, and the rate of absenteeism among Standard I pupils dropped. There is better interaction between teacher and pupils, leading to improved participation of pupils in class activities, and the programme now has become an important part of the education system in Mauritius, with widespread acceptance of its importance.
- Outcomes:** An assessment of the programme revealed that pupils were ready to start the Standard I programme with more confidence.

The programme is activity-based and child-centred. It is carried out during the whole of the child's first term. Children are not given textbooks; instead teachers are fully equipped to carry out activities that foster the process of learning through play, gradually moving into formal education.

However, the vocabulary that pupils will eventually use is introduced in the activities. The classroom arrangement resembles one to which the child has been accustomed in the single-term, pre-primary class. The programme's focus is on language development and the acquisition of abstract concepts through play-based activities.

Formal textbooks are introduced during the second term, while retaining the play-based activity and learning approach to literacy, numeracy, health and physical education. All Standard I classrooms provide purpose-built, age-appropriate furniture and resources to ensure a conducive learning environment, while encouraging a successful transition into formal primary schooling.

Implementation and challenges

The programme is driven at the central level by the curriculum directorate of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education, which has the responsibility for training educators in Mauritius. Relevant pedagogical materials have been developed to support the programme.

At the beginning of each year, once a school's head teacher has allocated teachers to specific classes, special training is provided for all educators of Standard I. The primary inspectorate is responsible for the programme's quality assurance, and a specific budget is allocated to each school to operate the programme. Schools are also given the responsibility for guiding parents to strengthen the continuum between school and home.

The major challenges identified relate to parental resistance: some parents have felt that, as their children are not being taught in the formal way with a textbook, the programme is a continuation of pre-primary activities, and that pupils are wasting time. Resistance has also come from teachers who are used to the traditional methods of teaching which are clearly not child-centred.

Intensive sensitisation has been conducted to inform parents, and through the mass media. Heads of schools have adopted an open-door approach to allow parents to understand the programme. Posters and leaflets, explaining the philosophy of the programme, have been prepared for parents and other stakeholders. Prior to this, briefings were conducted for all Standard I teachers.

Considering the positive results obtained from this programme to date, the Mauritius Education Ministry believes that this programme should be a normal feature of the transition from home or pre-schools to primary school especially in view of the new pedagogy which is non-textbook based, and which views learning as a fun activity. Further, young children's social and communication skills are encouraged by the Bridging the Gap programme.

If Mauritius were to repeat or redesign the initiative it would:

- involve all stakeholders – from the inception stage of the programme; and
- ensure consolidation of the curriculum in the pre-primary sector to reduce the potential learning gap. This will eventually expose the child to more play- and activity-based learning that will develop his or her confidence and self-esteem – which are essential in laying a strong foundation for all future learning.

Further information

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4.7 Certificate of Primary Education repeaters project, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Quality in education |
| Other issues addressed | Improving Certificate of Primary Education results and ensuring no wastage of human resources |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Increase the pass rate at the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) level, thus ensuring that all pupils are given the opportunity to access secondary schooling and improve the overall quality of output.
- Objectives:** To reduce the rate of ‘dropouts’ from the education system, by giving failed CPE students a second chance – through a programme of study that takes into account the student’s previous learning deficits.
- Outputs:** Although the project only began in 2011, the pass rate of CPE repeaters has increased by three per cent.
- Outcomes:** At the end of the initial project a positive change was noted in the pupils. They became more confident and developed a positive attitude towards the CPE examination. The teachers involved also had a sense of satisfaction and achievement. Teachers have been motivated to teach slower learners in a different way.

The CPE repeaters project is a ‘catch-up’ initiative, to allow pupils to acquire the basic essential competencies required after primary schooling. This initiative is important within the broader Mauritian national education system as it opens further avenues for those who want to ‘beat the failure trap’. The transition rate will thus be increased, as more students will be allowed or able to access secondary schooling, and move on to the tertiary level. By having more students graduating at the tertiary level, greater numbers of young people will become members of society able to contribute to sustainable development in Mauritius.

Implementation and challenges

The project has been designed to cover competencies not mastered from Standard III level schooling. First, teachers teach the essential learning competencies (ELC) for Standards III, IV and V, to ensure that pupils are ready to address the ELC component of the CPE. Next, to boost their self-esteem, a model question paper focussing on the ELC component is completed by pupils. From this, their shortcomings are identified, and teachers carry out revision and consolidation as a final stage in the process.

The project is managed at the central level by the Ministry of Education which has overall responsibility, and which provides budget allocations for the development of materials. Implementation is the responsibility of the curriculum directorate, while the primary inspectorate is responsible for monitoring and quality assurance.

The Mauritius Ministry of Education has not identified any significant challenges to implementing the project. Ministry personnel believe this is because all relevant tools and materials required were provided to teachers. Furthermore, intensive sensitisation was carried out, and all teachers responsible for repeaters’ classes were given appropriate training.

Further information

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4.8 Child-friendly approach in primary education, Sri Lanka

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Continuous school improvement |
| Other issues addressed | Personal development |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Primary students, teachers, parents and communities |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Lay a firm foundation for the development of the personality of the child; and develop in them the necessary competencies to continue to secondary education.
- Objectives:**
- (a) To ensure full participation of children in the 5–9 age group in primary education;
 - (b) To ensure all children completing primary education attain essential learning competencies;
 - (c) To ensure 80 per cent of children completing primary education attain mastery in desired learning competencies.
- Outputs:** Outputs include:
- (a) low absenteeism;
 - (b) fewer dropouts;
 - (c) introduction of nutrition programmes;
 - (d) cleaner physical environments;
 - (e) improved school medical inspection and referral services;
 - (f) better drinking water and sanitary facilities; and
 - (g) introduction of health clubs in primary schools.
- Outcomes:** Outcomes already identified from the initiative include:
- (a) improved community participation;
 - (b) increased levels of essential learning competencies;
 - (c) multilevel teaching;
 - (d) positive relationships with communities;
 - (e) activity-based education; and
 - (f) children now engaging in decision-making.

Sri Lanka is committed to making universal primary education a reality. To achieve this, the nation needs to address the combined challenges of: schooling access; the development of the full potentialities of all students at the primary education level; a protective, safe and healthy schooling environment; and effective participation of communities.

Sri Lanka's child-friendly approach is a school-based participatory process that builds the capacity of all stakeholders to work together for the holistic development of the child. It focuses on access to schooling, inclusive education and an enhanced quality of education, which will shape children's life chances for the future.

A framework has been developed for the child-friendly approach. It contains the definition of the child friendly school, six dimensions, a number of criteria within each dimension, and indicators for each criterion. If a school achieves all six dimensions, that school is then known as a 'child-friendly school'.

School self-assessment is another feature of this child-friendly approach. A representative group of all the stakeholders, including children, assesses the existing level of the school by using criteria formulated by the framework. The representative group then identifies school requirements in a priority order, and the school development plan is prepared using those priorities.

Implementation and challenges

The Sri Lankan Ministry of Education (MoE) supports schools through a national level resource group. Provincial resource groups are established and their capacity development is provided by the national resource group. Provincial resource groups are responsible (in turn) for enhancing the grassroots levels. Vertical budget allocations operate, while monitoring systems are part of the overall initiative's framework.

The child-friendly initiative is currently operating in 1,400 primary schools or primary sections, and is expected to expand gradually.

The six dimensions of the child-friendly approach to education are:

- rights-based and proactively inclusive;
- gender-responsive;
- improving quality learning outcomes;
- healthy, safe and protective of children;
- actively engaged with students, families and communities;
- supported by child friendly systems, policies, practices and regulations.

Within (four of) those six dimensions, specific criteria include:

Dimension 1: Rights-based and proactively inclusive

- (a) effective mechanisms for preventing 'dropouts' and seeking and responding to out-of-school children are in place and applied;
- (b) all children have equal access to activities and resources in the school;
- (c) corporal and psychological punishment are not practised and preventive measures and responses to bullying are in place; and
- (d) the school's undertakings are based on the understanding – by the whole school community – of the rights of the child.

Dimension 2: Gender-responsive

- (a) equal opportunities exist for girls and boys to support completion of primary education and to transition to secondary education;
- (b) girls and boys participate on an equal basis in all school activities; and
- (c) physical facilities are appropriate for girls and boys.

Dimension 3: Improving quality learning outcomes

- (a) adequate human resources and classroom facilities are available to support learning;
- (b) the classroom atmosphere is inclusive, stress-free, democratic and conducive for learning;
- (c) the school curriculum is adapted to bring in the local environment, culture and knowledge;
- (d) teachers are continuously improving their capacity through provided opportunities and their own initiatives;
- (e) child-centred teaching methodologies are used; and

- (f) essential learning competencies are regularly assessed and effective actions taken to ensure each child achieves essential learning competencies.

Dimension 4: Healthy, safe and protective for children

- (a) school-level policies on health, safety and protection are in place;
- (b) the school has available adequate facilities related to food, water and sanitation;
- (c) the school environment and facilities related to food, water and sanitation are well maintained and safe;
- (d) competency-based health education is effectively provided for students;
- (e) effective psycho-social support and referral services are available and used;
- (f) children are protected from harm, abuse and injury;
- (g) readiness exists for operational emergency preparedness and response plans.

The existing MoE quality assurance system is expected to be revised this year, and to include indicators of success in achieving a child-friendly framework. A guidance manual on child-friendly approaches for quality primary education has been made available to participating schools.

In implementing the child-friendly school initiative in other countries, the Sri Lankan MoE recommends that strong advocacy for the programme is essential; that documents must be made available to ensure effective dissemination of the programme; and that effective monitoring systems must be in place and used. In general, the MoE recommends that there must be a strong focus on capacity development.

Further information

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4.9 Closing the gap on indigenous disadvantage, Australia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Equality in schooling assistance for disadvantaged students |
| Other issues addressed | Indigenous education |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators Indigenous communities |

Initiative aims

Goal: Closing the gap in school level achievements for indigenous students compared to non-indigenous students.

Outputs: To date, the following key achievements have been achieved under the Closing the Gap initiative:

- (a) Sixty assistant teachers in the government sector have attained Certificate III level qualifications, six have achieved diplomas, ten have achieved graduate certificates and eight have achieved a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning degree.
- (b) In the Catholic sector the Growing Our Own programme has supported 19 staff members to complete in-service qualifications.
- (c) A total of 73 scholarships have been awarded across the graduate certificate and master's level to remote teachers, including eight additional indigenous teachers' scholarships.
- (d) An increase in the number of assistant teachers undertaking study from 100 to 349.
- (e) Ninety-nine completion bonuses to teachers and assistant teachers for the successful attainment of higher qualifications to offset study costs.
- (f) Schools are delivering vocational education and training (VET) in the middle programmes (Years 7–9 in the Northern Territory) to enhance the availability of flexible pathways programmes for middle years students. This has resulted in 77 students (in 2010) attaining a certificate or statement of attainment in pathways such as manufacturing, hospitality and engineering.
- (g) Enhanced services are being provided to support students with conductive hearing loss. Thirty-seven Closing the Gap schools have accessed services, such as professional learning programmes for classroom teachers, special education teachers and assistant teachers that focus on the provision of advice about improving classroom acoustics, and the provision of support in the development of action plans for individual and groups of students who are diagnosed with otitis media (middle ear disease) and conductive hearing loss.
- (h) Establishment of a remote improvement team to work intensively with targeted government schools to support improvement processes and whole school approaches to literacy.

- (i) Employment of a remote indigenous education manager to work closely with school leaders and facilitate enhanced community partnerships in education.
- (j) Continuation of a remote schools' specialist support team working with five remote Catholic schools in English as a second language, literacy and numeracy, early childhood, health and well-being and transition of secondary students to higher education.
- (k) Establishment of a quality remote teaching service team to improve workforce recruitment and selection to enhance teacher quality and retention.
- (l) Nineteen literacy and numeracy coaches are working across the Northern Territory, based both in schools and at the regional level to provide onsite support and training for teachers and assistant teachers to deliver evidence-based approaches to literacy, numeracy, and English as a second language teaching.

Outcomes: According to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)⁶⁰ Reform Council, National Indigenous Reform Agreement Performance report for 2009–10:

- (a) there was a significant improvement in the proportion of indigenous students at or above the national minimum standard in Year 3 reading nationally, and in Queensland and Western Australia; and
- (b) there was a statistically significant improvement nationally in Year 5 numeracy.

(Reading and numeracy national and jurisdictional results were generally consistent with the 2009 progress trajectories.)

According to the recently released National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) National Report for 2011:

- (a) the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Northern Territory improved in six out of the eight reading and numeracy test areas;
- (b) there was significant improvement in the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the national minimum standard in Year 3 numeracy, with the outcome increasing by 13.2 per cent between 2010 and 2011; and
- (c) in the other five test areas that showed improvement between 2010 and 2011 for Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, increases ranged from 7.5 to 2.0 per cent. The only decreases in outcomes were in Year 3 reading (a decrease of 3.1 per cent) and Year 5 reading (a decrease of 2.8 per cent). (ACARA) (2010).

Every student has equal right and opportunity to quality education. There is a gap between the educational attainment of indigenous and non-indigenous students. The Closing the Gap initiative aims to lift attainment rates for indigenous students, 'halve the gap for indigenous school students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade', and halve the gap for indigenous Year 12 attainment by 2020 (COAG Reform Council, 2011).

Under the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, all Australian governments have shared responsibility for closing the gap in indigenous disadvantage across six key areas, including literacy and numeracy and educational attainment.

The initiative aims to assist in improving educational outcomes for indigenous students by trialling and subsequently expanding intensive literacy and numeracy programmes in schools to assist indigenous students who are not meeting national minimum standards. The funding available under this initiative will assist education authorities to intensify

efforts towards halving the gap in reading, writing and numeracy between indigenous and non-indigenous students by 2018.

Implementation and challenges

Initiatives to support the Closing the Gap programme are being implemented in a variety of ways. The Australian government contracts some providers directly, and other funding is provided to the Northern Territory government through National Partnership arrangements, although all state and territory governments are working collaboratively to achieve the initiative's goal.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (2010–2014) is a key strategy to implement a number of Closing the Gap initiatives. The action plan was launched by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in June 2011, following endorsement from COAG (MCEECDYA, 2012).

The Australian government and state, territory government and non-government education authorities have been working collaboratively to progress activities under the action plan, and state and territory education ministers report annually on progress under the plan.

The action plan identifies 55 national, systemic and local level actions in six priority domains that evidence shows will contribute to improved outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. The priority domains are:

- readiness for school;
- engagement and connections;
- attendance;
- literacy and numeracy;
- leadership, quality teaching and workforce development; and
- pathways to real post-school options.

The initiative builds on commitments by COAG to introduce substantial structural and innovative reforms in early childhood education, schooling and youth, as outlined in national partnership agreements between the Australian government and the states and territories.

Under the action plan, education providers have nominated around 900 'Focus Schools' as a means to assure state and territory ministers that the benefits of national reforms are reaching those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students most in need. Education ministers have agreed to prioritise resources under the National Education Agreement (NEA) to achieve activities identified in the action plan.

Although individual or joint state and territory governments progress many of the actions under the action plan, the Australian government also funds a number of complementary measures. These measures include:

- (a) the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory package, involving 583 million Australian dollars (A\$) in schooling measures over ten years, for the following elements:
 - building a quality school workforce (additional teachers, quality teaching initiative, teacher housing);
 - improving school enrolment and attendance through welfare reform; and
 - introducing a school nutrition programme (A\$64M);
- (b) supporting the provision of quality early childhood services in the Northern Territory by providing continued operational funding for nine crèches in targeted communities (A\$11.4M over four years);

- (c) expanding the successful Sporting Chance Programme by establishing seven new boys-only academies and additional programmes to support girls (A\$4.8M over three years);
- (d) expanding the Teach Remote programme to strengthen the recruitment, selection, preparation, support and retention of teachers working in remote indigenous communities (A\$14.3M over three years); and
- (e) A\$30 million for the Focus School Next Steps initiative, a two-year project that will assist 101 schools in need of extra assistance to 'kick-start' activities using proven approaches to increase the school attendance, classroom engagement and academic achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Further information

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4.10 Developing a national curriculum, Australia

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Curriculum development |
| Other issues addressed | Helping disadvantaged students Supporting teachers and school leaders Improving literacy and numeracy levels |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: The Australian Curriculum will provide a clear, shared understanding of what young people should be taught and the quality of learning expected of them, regardless of their circumstances, the type of school that they attend or the location of their school.

Objectives: (a) to improve the quality, equity and transparency of Australia's education system;

(b) to contribute to the provision of world-class education in Australia by setting out the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for life and work in the twenty-first century and by setting common high standards of achievement across the country;

(c) to ensure there is consistency in what is taught in Australian schools so that students moving from one state or territory to another can be assured their new school will be teaching the curriculum at a similar, high standard;

(d) to facilitate teacher mobility across the country; and

(e) to improve Australian results in international assessment.

Outputs: Implementation of phase one of the Australian Curriculum (from Foundation to Year 10) is currently underway with substantial implementation expected by the end of 2013.

Outcomes: The introduction of the Australian Curriculum has been well received by the community. The curriculum provides the foundation for world-class, high-quality education for young people, while the online publication allows all Australians to see what students are expected to learn throughout their schooling.

In 2008, all Australian state and territory governments agreed that if Australia was to maintain its level of productivity and quality of life, the quality of education available to all young people in Australia needed to be of the highest order. All governments committed to the development and implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

For the first time, Australia will have a national curriculum that will ensure all students are taught to the same standard, regardless of where they go to school. As a relatively small country, it makes sense to have a national curriculum that will lift the standards of all students across the country. The commitment to develop an Australian Curriculum

reflects the willingness of the educational community to work together to develop a world-class curriculum for all young Australians.

This means that:

- the individual and combined efforts of states and territories can focus on how students' learning can be improved to achieve the national goals, regardless of individual circumstances or the location of their school;
- curriculum expertise across the country can be harnessed, and duplication of effort and resources reduced;
- high-quality resources can be developed more efficiently and made available around the country; and
- there will be greater consistency for Australia's increasingly mobile student and teacher population.

Curricula across Australia's eight states and territories have been developed over time and include differences in content and achievement standards. While these curricula have considerable strengths, there is also considerable divergence in what is taught between jurisdictions. Given the current trajectory of interstate migration, where some 80,000 school-age children move state each year, there is a substantial case for greater consistency of curriculum between states and territories.

While some effort had been made for a number of years in developing commonality between state and territory curricula, the decision to develop a national curriculum was part of a broader commitment by the current Australian government to improve school education.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)⁶¹ – governed by a board that includes representatives of all state and territory education ministers as well as the non-government schooling sector – was established by the federal government in 2009 to oversee the development of the curriculum.

The national curriculum will ensure that there is explicit agreement about the essentials that all young Australians should know and be able to do. It will enable states and territories, and local schools, to identify additional elements of knowledge which may also be valuable, and leave scope for creativity and sensible local variations.

The curriculum is being developed in three phases, based on the eight key learning areas outlined in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians:

- phase one – English, mathematics, science and history;
- phase two – languages, geography and the arts; and
- phase three – health and physical education, information and communication technology, design and technology, economics and business, and civics and citizenship. (MCEETYA, 2008).

The curricula for each learning area is developed through extensive consultation with the teaching profession and the community and written by educational experts – and includes both content and achievement standards. In addition to the key learning areas, three cross-curriculum priorities (sustainability, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures) are embedded across all areas of the curriculum.

Seven general capabilities are also featured throughout the curriculum, encompassing the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that, together with curriculum content in each learning area and the cross-curriculum priorities, will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century. The capabilities are literacy, numeracy, ICT capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical behaviour and intercultural understanding.

Implementation and challenges

Following agreement from all state and territory education ministers in December 2010, a staged implementation approach is underway. From 2012, some states and territories are already using the English, maths, science and history curriculum with all states and territories required to implement substantially by the end of 2013. It is expected that future phases will follow a similar model.

State and territory government and non-government education authorities and schools are responsible for implementation of the Australian Curriculum. This was a commitment for government schools under the National Education Agreement (NEA); and a requirement for non-government schools under the Schools Assistance Act 2008, which provides the legal and legislative framework for federal funding of schools.

While the Australian government does not have a direct role in implementation, it has invested significantly in a number of initiatives that will support implementation, including support for the development and alignment of online teaching resources linked to the Australian Curriculum, a flagship professional learning programme on leading curriculum change, and a digital strategy for teachers and school leaders linked to the Australian Curriculum.

In 2010, all Education Ministers agreed to a three-year period to achieve substantial implementation of the Phase one Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 10 (English, mathematics, science and history). During the initial implementation, jurisdictions are free to decide how they link Australian Curriculum achievement standards to their existing assessment and reporting practices. Development of the Year 11 and 12 curriculum in the initial four learning areas is currently underway and is expected to be finalised by late 2012 with implementation to follow.

Phase two of the Australian Curriculum involves the development of the curriculum in geography, languages and the arts. Work on this phase is progressing and curriculum development is expected to be completed in 2013 with implementation to follow.

Phase three of the Australian Curriculum involves the development of the curriculum in the remaining areas identified in the Melbourne Declaration – health and physical education, information and communications technology, design and technology, economics and business, and civics and citizenship. Development work in these areas is underway.

Given the differences between the existing state and territory curricula, each state and territory is starting out in a different position and therefore needs to take a different approach to implementing the Australian Curriculum. In some states, the Australian Curriculum has much in common with state-based curricula, while in other states there may be less in common.

Having a three-year implementation window allows time for jurisdictions to determine the extent of curriculum change required, work with stakeholders on implementation plans, and inform students and parents about changes to the school curriculum. It also provides time for additional resource development and teacher preparation.

The establishment of ACARA as an expert body, with oversight from all education authorities and governments, to develop and write the national curriculum has proven to be a successful model for high-quality curriculum development. The extensive consultation with the teaching profession, educational experts and the broader community conducted by ACARA has been crucial to ensuring the development of a world-class curriculum.

Further information

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4.11 Direct support to schools programme, Mozambique

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Devolution |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Improvement of access and quality of primary education |
| Other issues addressed | Decentralisation of decision-making and resource management Involvement of the community in the life of the school Alleviation of the cost of primary education for families |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

- Goals:**
- (a) improvement of access and quality of primary education;
 - (b) alleviation of the cost of primary education for families; and
 - (c) ensuring adequate funding for basic learning materials.
- Objectives:**
- (a) to improve the quality of education by providing grants to schools for the purchase of materials; and
 - (b) promoting retention of the most vulnerable children.
- Outputs:** According to the monitoring reports, communities have been participating in all aspects of the programme, and the increased funding has benefited the children. The direct support to schools (DSS) programme has made it possible for the neediest learners to attend school.
- Outcomes:** There is evidence that the programme is leading to quality improvement in the classroom. Equally importantly, it is empowering communities and strengthening community-school links. Schools and communities now decide how to use funds to improve the quality of education for their children. This arrangement has revitalised school councils and introduced local-level accountability and local-level solutions. Community and school empowerment not only contributes to quality enhancement and administrative efficiency, but also creates a stronger constituency for education.

In general, there is insufficient financing available to fully fund schools in Mozambique. The DSS programme was established to alleviate the cost of primary education for families and, at the same time, to improve the quality of education by providing grants to ensure the provision of minimum learning materials for primary schools. At a later stage, an additional component was introduced to target specifically orphans and vulnerable children in providing them with basic learning materials to motivate them to enrol and stay in school. Poverty is one of the main constraints to enrolment and to retaining students in schools.

The DSS programme was developed prior to the abolition of social action fund fees in schools. The cost of education was a constraint to enrolment in Mozambique, and school fees were a major reason for not enrolling children in school and for high dropout rates.

This initiative is very important as it is leading to quality improvement in the classroom. It is empowering communities and strengthening community-school ties, and is also reducing disparities among schools through financial support – and is the only mechanism to reach all schools in the country.

The programme was planned by the World Bank and the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), and discussed with other donors, but was implemented entirely by the ministry itself. It was launched in March 2003 and has two main purposes: to promote the decentralisation of decision-making and resource management in the sector; and to

further the quality of education through the supply of basic learning materials and the involvement of the community in the life of the school.

By allowing school councils to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of the funds, the objective of decentralisation was achieved. Quality was promoted by identifying basic materials for learners and teachers that could be purchased from the available funds. The scheme has continued through four phases and in 2006, entered the fifth phase. Now the programme is running in its (overall) sixteenth phase.

The first phase was started with the training of all provincial and district directors of education in the objectives and operationalisation of the programme. Special bank accounts, solely for the purpose of transferring the programme's funds, were then opened in the name of the district director.

Training and information materials were developed and printed, including manuals, brochures, posters, and wall and desk calendars. A wide range of communication strategies was used to reach the general public: these included newspapers and publicity and information spots introduced by the national anthem, through all local media, in Portuguese and in local languages.

Implementation and challenges

Once the programme was operational, funds were transferred to the accounts of the district directors of education, based on the number of schools in each district.

In the first year, a total of 37,721,840,000 Mozambique meticaïs (MT) was allocated. More than 8,100 English Programme (EP) schools could use up to MT240,000 each in two half-yearly disbursements to cover the cost of school materials for learners and teachers (notebooks, textbooks, library books, pencils, pens, erasers, dictionaries, glue, chalk, blackboards, maps, and cupboards with locks to store books), chosen from a list prepared by the MEC.

School managers were trained in the necessary procurement and financial procedures, and a letter of authorisation for the school to draw a cheque was countersigned. The school council, composed of teachers, community representatives, the school director, and the district director of education, decided on the most urgently needed items from the MEC list. A cheque was drawn and the items purchased directly by the school director and community representatives.

During the second phase, between MT3.5 million and MT90 million was allocated per school, according to the number of learners and the number of shifts. In addition, the district directorates of education received MT240,000 per school for the management team administering the programme.

The MEC developed and distributed a list of eligible schools in each district to the provincial and district directors. These lists specified the entitlement of each school and the goods each school received, and were available to all schools and could be reviewed by the general public. Each school, through its school council, prepared its selection from the list of materials, based on school needs and the funds identified as available – before the funds were paid out from the bank.

The ministry continued to strengthen the capacity of provincial and district directorates of education to confirm the objectives of the programme were being realised. In addition, regular auditing was carried out to ensure the efficiency of the programme. The programme's results led to the ministry's decision to continue the programme in subsequent years.

In the third phase, a new component, deworming, was trialled in two selected provinces in EP1 (Primary Grades 1 to 5) and EP2 (Grades 6 and 7) schools. To implement the deworming component, the Ministry of Health and the MEC decentralised planning of the entire process to a team activity (district staff and schools developed training and information materials). In this phase, EP1 schools received between MT4.2 million and MT70 million per school. Approximately 8,400 EP1 schools were involved, and the programme reached around 3.1 million learners.

One of the major setbacks in implementing the initiative has been the lack of resources to extend improvements across a number of programme aspects, including providing students with all necessary materials for learning; maintenance of schools; and the spread of the initiative to upper levels. Further, although the programme has been expanded now to encompass all schools, the target of US\$5 per primary school child has not yet been reached.

The Government of Mozambique is continuing to refine the programme, although facing challenges of ensuring good governance of the funds allocated, and efficient use of resources. An element of performance-based financing may contribute to meeting these challenges.

If other countries are considering such a programme, Mozambique advises that abolishing fees and providing direct support to schools and incentives for needy people may go a long way in improving access and some way in improving quality. However, a range of other interventions is also needed if quality is to be raised substantially and the initiative is to become sustainable.

Further information

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4.12 Early Grade Reading Assessment, The Gambia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Devolution |
| Main issue addressed | Improving learning outcomes |
| Other issues addressed | Poor reading abilities of children in the early grades of the basic cycle |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Improve the reading and comprehension abilities of pupils at an early age (as reading is the base for the understanding of all subjects).
- Objectives:** To improve the literacy level of pupils at the primary level, and the reading, writing and comprehension skills of pupils, and equip teachers with good teaching skills.
- Outputs:** Improved learning outcomes as evident in the National Assessment Test in Grades 3 and 5, and improved examination results and classroom participation.
- Outcomes:** There is evidence of positive changes in the reading and comprehension abilities of children. Children can now read as early as Grade 1.

The main thrust of the Gambian education policy between 2004 and 2015 is to improve the learning achievement levels of pupils and in turn, to improve overall quality.

The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) programme is an initiative that is addressing reading and comprehension abilities in Gambian schools. This initiative improves both teaching and learning processes. It is an effective method of assisting pupils in identifying letters and letter sounds and in improving reading abilities.

Implementation and challenges

Initially, a group of teachers from the six educational regions were trained to serve as trainers for the implementation at regional level. The step-down approach was used, and the trainers in turn, conducted training at the school level.

At the national level, a team from the (Gambia) Association of Teachers of English was identified to conduct follow-up training and supervision in schools. This team, together with the cluster monitors, monitors activities and addresses problems at the same time, through school-based and regional-based workshops.

The curriculum directorate also conducts impact assessments to measure the progress made periodically. To further support the initiative, a baseline study was conducted in 2007 to assess the level of the students in reading and related factors. This was followed by two impact assessments in 2009 and 2011 to determine the successes of the interventions and to make recommendations for improvement. The assessments show that marked improvements have been registered.

Inadequate finance could be a challenge to implementing the programme in the future, although the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education is managing this successfully to date, with the assistance of donor partners. If The Gambia were to extend the EGRA programme, it would implement coverage at the pre-primary level.

Other countries interested in learning more about EGRA are invited to conduct a study visit to The Gambia to find out how the initiative works and gather examples of good practices.

Further information

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4.13 Early literacy programme, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Improving literacy |
| Other issues addressed | Reading for enjoyment |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: To develop basic literacy skills right from early years.

- Objectives:**
- (a) to ensure that children are being exposed to language through constant interaction in a language-rich environment;
 - (b) to bridge the language gap between home and pre-school within a multilingual context;
 - (c) to ensure that educators and children have the opportunity to interact through purposeful talk and communicative activities;
 - (d) to ensure that children develop their vocabulary and language structures through culturally and developmentally appropriate activities like play, storytelling, puppetry and reading;
 - (e) to ensure that children are given the opportunity to handle and learn through books;
 - (f) to ensure that children are engaged in activities that lead to purposeful scribbling, drawing and writing acquisition;
 - (g) to develop children's ability to engage in critical thinking and questioning; and
 - (h) to ensure that children can smoothly acquire other languages at a later stage.

Outputs: The project is being implemented in 90 per cent of Early Childhood Care and Education Authority schools, and in 70 per cent of private, pre-primary schools, with books being exchanged on a fortnightly basis.

Outcomes: Increased participation of parents in school activities.

With the advent of new technologies, some children have lost the passion and skills for reading books. Through this initiative, children are being exposed to reading and other print materials from their early years, with the objective of inculcating a reading culture, both at school and at home.

The initiative aims to address the issue of failure at the end of primary schooling, particularly in the area of language, communication and literacy, through an early years' intervention programme. By ensuring that pre-school children have developed reading, writing and other related physical skills prior to their admission to primary school, the language gap between home, pre-primary and primary is being bridged in a very systematic way.

Implementation and challenges

To instil a reading culture, teaching and learning strategies enhance communication, language and literacy, through:

- use of games and play;
- use of songs, music rhymes and other forms of poetry;
- dramatisation of familiar stories, miming, recitation, role play, and simulation;
- use of shared reading of stories;

- narration of stories with children's participation; and
- use of practical experiences in contexts such as cookery and gardening, and for further language acquisition.

This programme, managed by the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority, is being implemented in all pre-primary schools in Mauritius. Among other strategies, three key approaches are used:

- *Establishing a reading corner in all pre-primary classrooms*

The objective is to give children access to a wide variety of reading and other print materials that are familiar and will hold their interest. These reading materials are in different languages, although mainly in English and French. To encourage early years' literacy, children are expected to have at least 30 minutes of teacher-supported reading time each day.

- *Bedtime story project*

This initiative aims at involving parents in setting up a reading corner at home, and engaging them in reading activities with their children, with a view to sustaining and supporting the in-school literacy programme. Apart from enriching vocabulary, parents reading to their children helps to build a strong emotional bond between them. It also supports the conversational skills of the child at home and at school. (A child-friendly book lending system has been set up at schools whereby parents can borrow books from their child's school.)

- *Annual book fair*

To celebrate *Annual World Book Day*, the authority organises annual book fairs for pre-primary children, in collaboration with other institutions (National Library, Centre de Lecture et d'Animation Culturelle and local authorities) where books for children aged 3–6 years are put on sale at very competitive prices. Book fairs are attended by educators, parents and pre-school children with the objective of encouraging parents to establish a reading corner at home.

The budget for the early literacy programme initiative is included within the annual budget of the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority for school-based projects. At the school level, the project is being implemented and co-ordinated by educators under the supervision of the teacher educator supervisor.

To date, the only significant implementation challenges noted have been that: some private, pre-primary schools face financial difficulties in purchasing and or renewing their stock of books; and some schools were unwilling to renew the book lending scheme because some books were not returned by the pupils.

Early literacy programme organisers advise other countries interested in implementing a similar programme to ensure they have the full and active participation of parents as partners. Further, if funds allow, the relevant early childhood authority could offer reading materials to private, pre-primary schools in identified pockets of poverty, to help those schools sustain the project. An added improvement would be allowing schools to access the services of mobile libraries (*bibliobus*), often run by local authorities.

Further information

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4.14 Eco-schools environmental education programme, Seychelles

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Environmental education (conservation education) |
| Other issues addressed | Education for sustainable development, and global participation |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Promote environmental education and education for sustainable development in Seychelles' education system.

Objectives: The initiative had four objectives:

- (a) to enable students and teachers to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are essential to maintaining a healthy environment;
- (b) to promote conservation education at school and at the community level so as to suggest solutions for unsustainable practices;
- (c) to encourage schools to be more environmentally friendly and more conducive to learning, and to catering to the needs of students and teachers; and
- (d) to support other partners with their education plans related to environmental education or education for sustainable development.

Outputs: The transformation in schools' environment and attitude included:

- (a) more plants for shade, beautification, shelter or food for animals, with benches used for recreational purposes, and murals showing environment concepts (such as protecting the mangroves or conserving water);
- (b) knowledge developed within the different projects and activities;
- (c) increase in the involvement of students and teachers in the projects or activities;
- (d) high participation of parents;
- (e) donations from partners (such as environmental education resources, bins, benches or other resources to beautify the school compound);
- (f) improvement in the participation of some participating primary and secondary schools as they establish their eco-schools committees and develop their action plans following support provided at a two-day workshop in October 2011;
- (g) participation of schools in national competitions, community projects such as tree planting; and
- (h) improvement in punctuality from students as the school is a fun and conducive learning environment.

Moreover, the programme also caters for low achievers, enabling them to engage in more practical activities and this has had an impact on their learning processes.

Outcomes: Outcomes identified to date include:

- (a) more positive attitudes from teachers;
- (b) students willing to take up jobs in the environment field;
- (c) ongoing learning processes on different environmental issues or topics;
- (d) sensitivity of students towards environmental issues;
- (e) students and teachers making use of skills such as recycling; and
- (f) positive attitudes of students when using water on the school compound, and student interest in other eco-friendly projects on the school compound.

The environment of Seychelles is vital to the economy: tourists come to enjoy the uniqueness and beauty of the country's natural resources. Moreover, some of the nation's natural resources such as fish are exported to many countries and thus provide a source of income for the economy.

A healthy economy means more job opportunities and equal sharing of the country's success between each responsible and productive citizen. Furthermore, students learn that the natural resources in their environment need to be protected so that the country's economy is not affected. Students also have the opportunity to use their abilities to promote environmental education and education for sustainable development as young ambassadors at a school level, in the community, or nationally.

This initiative helps to support the policies on the protection of the environment, while also promoting other topics related to health, safety and culture. The programme creates a foundation for students as the generation of tomorrow learns about different environmental issues or unsustainable practices that have an impact on their country. It equips them with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to adopt more sustainable practices and to prevent negative environmental issues from having a detrimental impact on their country's environment.

Implementation and challenges

The initiative is being co-ordinated by the environmental education unit which forms part of the physical education and co-curricular section within the schools division of the Ministry of Education. It is implemented as part of the classroom curriculum and through micro-projects, and is supported by clubs in schools including wildlife clubs, environment clubs such as the recycling club, friends of Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve clubs, and Red Cross clubs.

An annual budget is provided by the ministry for the environmental education unit, for expenses such as: transportation fees for school environment leaders to travel from inner islands to the main island for meetings and workshops; buying equipment or resources and for printing; and meeting expenses for workshops or training for school environment leaders.

As well as the management role undertaken by the environmental education unit, many other sections in the Ministry of Education support the programme, including the centre for curriculum, assessment and teacher support, and the quality assurance section.

The annual eco-schools competition, in which schools submit their portfolio, also increases awareness of the initiative. Three schools from each schooling level: pre-primary, primary and secondary – are selected as awardees in each category. Other schools are given the opportunity to view the portfolios of the winning schools through visits conducted during the following year, and supported by the environmental education unit.

The major challenges facing the initiative to date have been:

- gaining better engagement from all head teachers;
- increasing the involvement of parents and communities in the programme;

- developing strategies to interest, inform and involve other teachers, students, and support staff;
- limited funding for some projects which are costly to implement (e.g. setting up a nursery to beautify school grounds, buying gardening equipment);
- donations from some organisations which do not necessarily benefit all participating schools;
- encouraging the increased use of environment-related resources in other teaching and learning;
- demands on schools from other significant school-based and external activities and competitions; and
- partner organisations who expect schools to collaborate with them on implementing a component of their (organisational) education plan, but which do not provide funding for projects.

For other countries considering a similar eco-schools project, Seychelles recommends ensuring that the proper structures are in place, planning a staged approach carefully, identifying responsibilities, and locating funding sources. Nevertheless, the initiative has been a very successful (if demanding) activity and Seychelles looks forward to the opportunity to share its ideas on eco-schools.

Further information

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4.15 EdTech Leadership Cohort, Canada

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Twenty-first century teaching and learning |
| Other issues addressed | Educational technology, ICTs |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Support the development of twenty-first century teachers.
- Objectives:** To develop educational technology leaders who are knowledgeable and skilled in the use of educational technologies.
- Outputs:** As a result of their participation in the EdTech Leadership Cohort, the teacher candidates have been provided with the necessary experience to be considered twenty-first Century teachers and future EdTech leaders, who can provide guidance to their colleagues and support the development of twenty-first Century teaching and learning throughout the schools that employ them.
- Outcomes:** The cohort participants have already shown leadership as they have been asked to provide training and deliver workshops to large numbers of practising teachers (who have noted that it was some of the most effective professional development in which they had participated).

As the education community continues to struggle with making twenty-first century teaching and learning a reality, the need for leaders that understand the challenges and benefits of using technology in the classroom grows.

The EdTech Leadership Cohort was designed to develop educational technology leaders who are knowledgeable and skilled in the use of educational technologies that can improve student learning and school operations in Kindergarten–12 schools and who can serve as educational technology leaders in their school.

Implementation and challenges

The EdTech Leadership Cohort initiative is managed by Brock University in Ontario, Canada, whose Faculty of Education provides Primary/Junior, Junior/Intermediate, and Intermediate/Senior teacher preparation programmes. The Faculty of Education has an enrolment of 7,000+ full- and part-time candidates, a faculty, staff and field associate complement of nearly 150, and a satellite campus in Hamilton.

To support their development as future educational technology leaders, members of the EdTech Leadership Cohort were required to become knowledgeable about the most recent literature regarding twenty-first century teaching and learning, emerging educational technologies, teacher leadership, and the impact and challenges of educational technology integration.

As part of the educational technology coursework, cohort participants were provided with hands-on training in the use of a variety of instructional technologies including smart boards (interactive digital whiteboards), smart pens (pens with an inbuilt processor and voice recorder), LCD projections, document cameras, interactive classroom clickers, digital audio players, digital video cameras, Twitter, blogs, and Google Docs.

In addition to developing their technical competencies, participants received instruction in the technological, pedagogical and content knowledge required to use technology to enhance teaching and learning. This was followed by coursework that examined best practices in designing professional development for adult learners.

Each person participating in the EdTech Leadership Cohort was required to create an online learning object to support teacher professional development; deliver a professional development workshop; and provide one-to-one coaching to a faculty member, instructor or classroom teacher in the use of a specific educational technology.

If considering a similar initiative, other countries are advised to remember that, despite the notion that ‘digital natives’⁶² are skilled at using technology in their personal lives, often they do not have the necessary pedagogical understanding to effectively use technology in the classroom, and require significant support and guidance to become twenty-first century educators.

Further information

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4.16 Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme, Namibia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Planning and building a learning nation |
| Other issues addressed | Knowledge-based economy |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary Tertiary Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Marginalised youth Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

- Goals:
- (a) respond to the call of 'Vision 2030'⁶³ so Namibia can improve the quality of life of its citizens, to be comparable with the developed world;
 - (b) strengthen the education system; and
 - (c) transform the nation into a knowledge-based economy by strengthening the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of general education and the training system.

Objectives: The strategic framework identifies five main objectives:

- (a) quality and effectiveness,
- (b) equity and access,
- (c) development relevance and responsiveness,
- (d) delivery capacity and management, and
- (e) efficiency of resource mobilisation and utilisation.

Outputs: Outputs noted to date include:

- (a) the school feeding programme has contributed to increased school improvement and improved attendance;
- (b) new schools and additional classrooms have been constructed;
- (c) early grade reading assessment (EGRA) is managed as a remedial tool for learner assessment;
- (d) textbooks and learners' materials have been procured and distributed to schools;
- (e) improved participation and enrolments;
- (f) parents understand the importance of contributing to schools, financially or otherwise;
- (g) some schools have shown remarkable improvement in the Grade 10 national exams;
- (h) standardised achievement tests (SATs) have been implemented to improve performance in mathematics, English and science; and

- (i) English language proficiency (ELP) testing established the level of teachers' English proficiency in order to align the training programmes to the needs of the teachers.

Outcomes: Through school visits and classroom observation by inspectors of education and advisory teachers in the cluster where conferences took place, it has been noted that the majority of teachers are more positive towards teaching and learning. Parents are committed and supportive towards teaching and learning, and some teachers are doing their lesson preparation and taking ownership of the subjects they teach. The number of stakeholder and the level of civil participation have increased at a regional and national level.

The Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) is aimed at improving the quality of education by responding to the call of 'Vision 2030' and facilitating the transition to a knowledge-based economy. (Associated with ETSIP, the National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia initiative has a focus on improving quality teaching and learning at individual schools.)

Implementation and challenges

ETSIP is phased in three five-year cycles, which coincide with the national development plans. The initiative is important to the development of the broader education system, and is a comprehensive sector-wide programme which covers:

- (a) early childhood development and pre-primary education;
- (b) general education;
- (c) vocational education and training;
- (d) tertiary education and training;
- (e) knowledge and innovation; and
- (f) information, adult and lifelong learning.

Although each sub-programme of ETSIP has its own results indicators, progress towards achieving 11 broader indicators, which have assisted in the effective monitoring of the programme, includes:

- Number of children from disadvantaged communities who enter primary education having successfully completed one year of pre-primary education increased from zero to 8,475 by 2011;
- Enrolment in Grade 11 increased from 14,777 in 2005 to 21,497 by 2011;
- Percentage of learners earning D or higher in mathematics, English and science in Grade 10;
- Percentage of learners earning D or higher in mathematics, English and science in Grade 12;
- National average Southern African Consortium of Educational Quality (SACMEQ) test scores (reading and mathematics) have increased;
- Percentage of learners receiving life skills education increased from 60 per cent in 2007 to 95 per cent in 2011;
- Total enrolment in vocational education and training increased from 2,733 in 2005 to 5,000 by 2011;
- Average annual completion rates for vocational and educational training trainees increased from 56 per cent in 2005 to 90 per cent in 2011;
- Employment rates of vocational and educational training graduates by category, within one year of graduation, as determined by tracer studies;

- Increase at all diploma, degree and postgraduate levels (awards) in key human resource categories; and
- Adult literacy rate increased from 84 per cent in 2005 to 90 per cent by 2011.

The initiative's key purpose is to enhance substantially the sector's contribution to the attainment of strategic national development goals, and to facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy. It will also complement the broader aims of the Ministry of Education, and improve learning outcomes in schools. ETSIP is a national document, controlled and monitored centrally, but its implementation is decentralised, meaning that all the activities take place at regional education directorates.

ETSIP covers all sub-sectors and the strategic objectives are distributed over a 15-year strategic plan. The first phase of implementation was from 2006–2011 and ETSIP is currently in phase two of implementation (2012–2016). Critical cross-cutting issues, such as ICT, HIV/AIDS, and capacity development, are mainstreamed into the key sub-programmes. However, HIV/AIDS has two dimensions: i.e., as a stand-alone subcomponent and as mainstreaming.

ETSIP is being managed at a regional level and is (generally) funded by the Ministry of Education and development partners. Regional directorates develop their annual (costed) programmes, and submit their needs to the head office; funds are then made available to regions for implementation.

The regional directorates and other heads of divisions are responsible for compiling reports for headquarters, while ETSIP reviews take place every three months, in which all heads of divisions and development partners participate.

Major challenges faced in implementing the initiative have included: placing pre-primary and primary education 'centre stage'; implementing monitoring and evaluation processes; assessing the effectiveness of the training approaches; and the limited extent of evidence to show improved learning outcomes. For greater quality assurance, there is a need to develop a simple monitoring tool to measure performance indicators.

Further information

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4.17 Education Sector Enhancement Programme, Barbados

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Sector enhancement – quality education for all |
| Other issues addressed | Human resource development Civil works Technology integration Curriculum reform |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Lay a firm foundation for the development of the personality of the child, and develop in them the necessary competencies to continue to secondary education.

Objectives: (a) to ensure full participation of children in the 5–9 age group in primary education;
(b) to ensure all children completing primary education attain essential learning competencies; and
(c) to ensure 80 per cent of children completing primary education attain mastery in desired learning competencies.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date include:
(a) low absenteeism;
(b) fewer dropouts;
(c) nutrition programmes introduced;
(d) cleaner physical environment;
(e) improved school medical inspection and referral services;
(f) better drinking water and sanitary facilities; and
(g) the introduction of health clubs in primary schools.

Outcomes: Outcomes include:
(a) improved community participation;
(b) increased levels of essential learning competencies;
(c) multilevel teaching;
(d) positive relationships with communities;
(e) activity-based education; and
(f) children are engaging in decision-making.

The Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP) is designed to address a set of major priorities: early childhood education, educational management for leaders, increasing literacy and numeracy skills and addressing information technology.

Comprehensive reform of the entire primary and secondary school system in Barbados is a prime objective of the programme. It is intended that the output will be an increase in the number of young people who can contribute to the sustainability of the social, cultural and economic development of Barbados. This is expected to prepare citizens for the task of nation building as well as revaluing the role of education in the sphere of national development.

Reinforcement of the concept that learning is a continuous, lifelong process is also an important part of the initiative's philosophy. Teachers must be made aware of the importance of catering to the individual needs of students. Greater partnerships between school, home and the community need to be fostered. Through this, it is hoped that students will come to understand the necessity of being able to live and work harmoniously with other persons in their environments. The aim is to prepare students for life in a technologically advanced society by ensuring that all students who leave school will have a good knowledge of, adequate skill in, and favourable attitudes towards the use of information technology.

Implementation and challenges

Barbados faces a challenging international environment. Preferential markets and quotas which were used to determine areas of economic endeavour and employment in Caribbean countries no longer apply. Barbados has, over the last fifteen years, achieved most in areas in which there were no preferential markets or quotas. These include tourism, international business and the informatics sector.

More emphasis is being placed on competitiveness and reciprocity in the international arena, resulting in changes to the structure of the economy and the nature of employment opportunities. It is, therefore, imperative that people are trained to perform in areas where the economy is expanding.

In order to generate increasing wealth among the populace, the country must produce a considerably higher proportion of citizens capable of entering such spheres not merely as employees at the lower level but more importantly, at all levels and as entrepreneurs and innovators. The ability to better meet current demands for unskilled jobs, while necessary, is not a platform for wealth creation, higher savings, investment, and long-term national development. The radical changes of many of these alterations will pose challenges in themselves.

The components of the ESEP initiative and the implementation process involved are:

- (a) civil works at primary and secondary school;
- (b) teacher training and technical assistance;
- (c) institutional strengthening; and
- (d) procurement and installation of hardware and software.

Tangible benefits have already resulted from the programmes. The majority of the schools in Barbados have been refurbished. All schools have been made technologically ready, with public primary schools possessing at least one computer lab and public secondary schools having at least two computer labs. All teachers have their own personal laptop or easy access to technology, and every school has an information technology co-ordinator in place.

In the last three years of the project, there has been an increase of students taking the IT exam at the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) level. The new curriculum is implemented in all schools and a significant number of teachers are trained in basic technology, at the very least. The audio-visual aids unit has been strengthened by the creation of the software review centre.

Due to these developments and despite delays, the project is now set to achieve the goals established at the start of the initiative.

Further information

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4.18 Education sector planning for quality outcomes, Bangladesh

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Resourcing |
| Other issues addressed | Increased use of technology |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Improve the quality of education services in Bangladesh.

Objectives: To enact the National Education Policy, 2010, including:

- (a) distribution of approximately 640 million books;
- (b) hosting of a dynamic website for teaching and learning methods and uploading 109 books;
- (c) converting text books into e-books;
- (d) online registration for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations and online publication of results;
- (e) processing admission in public universities using SMS technology;
- (f) on-time completion of SSC, HSC, Junior School Certificate (JSC) and Junior Dakhil Certificate (JDC) examinations;
- (g) nationwide on-time commencement of classes;
- (h) introduction of lottery for admission in Class1;
- (i) providing safety and security for female students;
- (j) assurance of quality in higher education; and
- (k) providing midday meals for students.

Outputs: Outputs related to the above goal and objectives are being achieved progressively. Nevertheless, results to date show that success rates in the SSC examinations of 2011 increased by 2.33 per cent in comparison with 2010. Bangladesh has made significant progress, especially with regard to increasing access and gender equity, both at primary and secondary levels. Gross primary enrolment rates increased from 90 per cent in the late 1990s to 98 per cent in 2003, while a corresponding increase in enrolment rates at the secondary level indicates a rise to 44 per cent. Gender parity in access to primary and secondary education has also been achieved.

Outcomes: Increased access to quality education services, and substantial progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Major reforms undertaken by the government for improving the quality of education include introduction of a uni-track curriculum in secondary education from 2006; school-based assessment at secondary level; reform of secondary school examination systems; privatisation of textbook writing and publication; reorganisation of management committees and governing bodies for non-governmental educational institutions; formation of an oversight committee for the supervision of teaching in classrooms; and strengthening teachers' training.

Implementation and challenges

Bangladesh is undertaking a number of diverse initiatives in an attempt to improve the quality of education services. These include the following:

- Each year, the government provides stipends to 3.9 million ‘poor but meritorious students’ through four projects. Aligned with this, to help the students and to facilitate opportunities, the Prime Minister's Education Assistance Trust Fund has been introduced, and has allocated 1000 crore taka (Tk) (approximately US\$120 million) to this purpose.
- To improve the quality of teachers and officers working in educational institutions 250,000 teachers have been trained in a range of subjects, and 1,920 new teachers have been recruited for schools.
- Under the infrastructure development project ‘Construction of selected non-governmental secondary school/madrasah building’, a total of 3,000 new high schools and 1,000 Madrasah constructions are in progress. Construction of another 1,500 non-government college buildings is also underway.
- In order to popularise technical education and to tackle unemployment, the Ministry of Education is observing Vocational and Technical Education Week every year. This has resulted in increased enrolment in vocational and technical educational institutions.
- Two shifts in vocational and technical education institutions have been introduced and the number of places has been increased. Another 795 new technical education institutions are permitted to provide vocational technical education in the country.
- To modernise Madrasah education and to ensure it aligns with global needs, 100 new vocational courses in Madrasah have been implemented, and the existing general education science and computer programmes have been introduced. Thirty-one Madrasahs have been given permission to start honours’ courses in four subjects, while 35 Madrasahs have been transformed into ‘Model Madrasahs’.

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4.19 Educators' forum on Aboriginal education, Canada

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Addressing issues within Aboriginal education and sharing ideas, evidence and experiences in Aboriginal early childhood education and Kindergarten–12 education with respect to programmes, policies and practices for student access |
| Other issues addressed | Strengthening Aboriginal language and culture Enhancing equity in funding Increasing access, retention and graduation Sharing responsibility and accountability Planning for transitions – seamless systems for learners Reporting and benchmarking success Providing programmes and services Engaging all partners in First Nations, <i>Métis</i> and <i>Inuit</i> education ⁶⁴ |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary Tertiary Vocational training Marginalised youth Multi-sector |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Investigate what works best for Aboriginal learners in early childhood education (ECE) and K-12 education.

Objectives: (a) strengthening Aboriginal language and culture;
(b) enhancing equity in funding; and
(c) engaging all partners in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education.

Outcomes: Outcomes to date include:
(a) improved academic outcomes;
(b) increased community wellness and student well-being;
(c) a positive link to employment;
(d) increased participation in the education system; and
(e) active participation in community life.

Despite many gains across provinces and territories in recent years, student dropout rates among Aboriginal youth remain high, and the transition rate from secondary school to post-secondary education remains low.

Along with the rapid growth in the number of Aboriginal children and youth in the school systems, several other factors present ongoing challenges:

- Aboriginal students, both male and female, perform at lower levels than other students – and this gap is not closing fast enough;
- transience levels are very high for Aboriginal students, as individuals and families move frequently on- and off-reserve;

- the number of well-trained Aboriginal teachers remains low; and
- existing curricula and teaching methods do not sufficiently reflect Aboriginal needs and values, and need to be addressed.

Implementation and challenges

Aboriginal education is one of the key activity areas identified as a priority for Canada's Ministers of Education in their joint declaration, 'Learn Canada 2020'. At the same time, the number of young Aboriginal people is rapidly increasing, with a forecast that in the next 15 to 20 years, Aboriginal students will represent more than 25 per cent of the elementary student population in some provinces and territories. In Nunavut, Inuit already represent 96 per cent of the student population. It is essential, therefore, that the issues arising from this be dealt with promptly.

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) educators' forum on Aboriginal education brought together a wide range of stakeholders in Aboriginal education – from educators and academics to government officials and representatives of Aboriginal organisations – to talk about successful strategies and practices in Aboriginal learners in early-childhood education and K–12 education.

The forum was participant-driven and structured around a series of case-study presentations on promising programmes, policies, and practices. Case studies addressed the themes identified at the 2009 CMEC summit on Aboriginal education.

Forum participants examined programmes, policies, and practices that have been shown to be effective in improving one or more aspects of Aboriginal ECE and/or K–12 education, including:

- improved academic outcomes;
- increased community wellness;
- increased student well-being, self-confidence, identity, values, pride, personal development, and competence;
- a positive link to employment;
- increased participation in the education system; and
- active participation in community life.

The key success of the CMEC educators' forum was that it brought together stakeholders from across the nation to engage in face-to-face dialogue, exchange ideas with their colleagues and peers, and build networks in the field of Aboriginal ECE and K–12 education.

Further information

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4.20 Enhancement programme for primary students, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Improvement of quality and promotion of equity in education |
| Other issues addressed | Reduce over-reliance on private tuition in the primary sector |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: Promote the holistic development of the child and improve academic performance.

Objectives: The initiative's objectives are:

- (a) to promote the overall development of the young child;
- (b) to render the learning experiences of pupils more enriching and rewarding; and
- (c) to reduce end-of-primary cycle failure rates through the use of a differentiated pedagogy.

Outputs: Outputs to date include:

- (a) a relatively high participation rate has been registered (an average of 70 per cent);
- (b) teachers who resisted the programme in the first year have subsequently volunteered to adhere to it;
- (c) children following the enhancement programme have demonstrated positive behavioural changes through their performance in activities like drama, music, drawing and painting; and
- (d) the programme helps release hidden talents in both teachers and students;
- (e) and new resource materials have been produced in a short time span.

Outcomes: The programme culminates in a national competition which serves to showcase the range of students' different talents. The success of the initiative during its first year of implementation in Standard IV led to its extension in Standard III, with the inclusion of more subjects – including Asian language subjects. Although a preliminary evaluation of the programme is forthcoming, feedback obtained to date has indicated that the programme is working in the right direction to achieve the holistic development of learners.

The programme is premised on the concern that a purely academic emphasis has resulted in the distortion of the teaching and learning process – and needs to be addressed. The competitive nature of end-of-cycle examinations (Certificate of Primary Education) can result in undue pressure and stress on young children, and a thwarted growth with almost no leisure time. Teaching can be distorted and driven by assessment, and private tuition classes can be geared towards education drilling to pass examinations.

The enhancement programme was introduced in 2010 for Standard IV pupils in all public and grant-aided primary schools in Mauritius. Because of the success achieved, the programme was extended to Standard III pupils in 2011.

The programme curriculum has two components: (a) academic subject areas that form part of the normal curriculum and are taught by the class teacher; and (b) extracurricular activities delivered by resource persons.

Participating pupils are exposed to a more interactive and participatory pedagogy. The 75-minute programme for three days each week is designed over two sessions.

Approximately 45 minutes are used to cover pedagogical aspects of the Standard IV curriculum, by reinforcing work in core subjects of English, French, mathematics, science, history and geography. A further 30 minutes are devoted to a diversity of extra-curricular activities such as drama, physical education, sports, music, painting, and the arts. Such activities would not have been offered in the traditional private tuition approach.

The Mauritius Institute of Education has produced learning materials and teachers' guides to support the programme, while resource persons undergo training before and during the programme implementation. The programme delivery is further enhanced through the use of modern technology.

Implementation and challenges

The programme is driven at the central level; the zone directorates look after implementation, monitoring and supervisory aspects; while the Mauritius Institute of Education is responsible for curriculum development and the training of teachers and inspectors.

The pedagogical strategies adopted during the enhancement programme are expected to be integrated in the regular classes and carried forward to the upper primary cycle. Through an allocated budget, teachers, resource persons, headmasters, inspectors and ancillary staff are remunerated for their roles in the programme.

A major challenge has been the resistance of teacher unions who saw the programme as an alternative to private tuition, and therefore believed it to be against the pecuniary interest of their members. (A significant number of teachers continued with their private tuition classes offered outside school hours.)

Wide sensitisation of all stakeholders for ownership of the programme was undertaken, and financial incentives given to headmasters, teachers, resource persons, inspectors and ancillary staff. However, enhancement programme personnel believe that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms still need to be strengthened.

According to programme personnel, if other countries are considering a similar initiative, it may be advisable to extend training to headmasters and inspectors, as well as holding ongoing training sessions for educators and resource persons in charge of extra-curricular activities – and to support teachers by providing more facilities.

Further information

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4.21 Establishing a national curriculum framework, Dominica

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Relevance and inclusion |
| Other issues addressed | School improvement |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |
| | Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Establish a national curriculum framework that provides all citizens with high-quality education and training, and which facilitates individual well-being and national development.

Objectives: To enable all learners to acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills to function productively in the modern world.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date include:

- (a) programme of studies;
- (b) learning outcomes;
- (c) attainment targets;
- (d) a set of curriculum guides in core and foundational subjects;
- (e) teachers trained in visual and performing arts; and
- (f) improvement in literacy, especially reading at or above grade levels – which now stands at 80 per cent.

Outcomes: Outcomes include:

- (a) improved community participation;
- (b) increased levels of essential learning competencies;
- (c) multilevel teaching;
- (d) positive relationships with communities;
- (e) activity-based education; and
- (f) engaging children in decision-making.

Mandated under the Education Act 1997, the national curriculum makes provision for the development of programmes of studies, attainment targets, learning outcomes and assessments at key stages of the school system. It outlines the core and foundational subjects to be taught, and the instructional time allocated for each of these subjects.

Implementing a national curriculum was an essential step in harmonising the education system across Dominica's schools. It allowed for the development of agreed national programmes of studies, learning outcomes and assessments that are common to all schools, and will be driven by the employment needs of the country.

The initiative included the establishment of a national curriculum framework, based on discussions at 11 town hall meetings across the island, and from other national consultations. It included the establishment of programmes of study, learning outcomes and curriculum guides in all core areas at Key Stages 1 and 2, as well as the development of a guide for ICT across the curriculum.

Implementation and challenges

Until the current national curriculum initiative, the nation's curriculum was school-based and driven (in secondary education) by syllabuses arising from the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate examinations (CSEC). It was irrelevant, fragmented and did not meet the expectations and development thrust of the country. Furthermore, it was clearly necessary to align the curriculum with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which is mandated to harmonise education within the OECS.

As an initial stage, subject teachers and other key experts in each area developed the programmes of study, attainment targets and learning outcomes, as well as determining success criteria. Curriculum guides in each of these key areas were developed; teachers trained in their use; and a phased roll-out took place. Curriculum officers and other school supervisors are currently monitoring the delivery of the curriculum, and providing feedback and support.

A curriculum-based measurement strategy and process is monitoring student progress on learning at Key Stage 1 (Grades Kindergarten–2), while national assessments are held every year at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Grades 3–6), and also at Grade 4. The results inform education directions and instruction, as they are formative assessments.

Financial and time constraints were challenges in developing the full curriculum guides. To date, Key Stages 1 and 2 have been completed (started in 2006), and by May 2012, finances for developing guides for Key Stage 3 will have become available. Consultants to guide the process have only recently been appointed.

Continuous training for teachers in understanding and delivering the new curriculum needs to be implemented, and the limited work force to support and supervise such implementation – particularly at the central level – is a significant challenge that also needs to be addressed.

Other challenges still facing the Dominican Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development include the limited number of learning tools currently available to support the successful delivery of the curriculum, and the lack of sufficient financial resources to procure these tools.

If the nation were to repeat the initiative, it would make sure that it had sufficient financial resources to complete the task in one continuous process, instead of the long, six-year gap between beginning one phase and the next. (This delay was due largely to economic uncertainty and the austerity Dominica experienced between 2002 and 2006.)

Dominica advises that other countries considering introducing a similar national curriculum initiative should be prepared for the difficult task of national consultation. Such a process is an essential part of the process of attaining stakeholder support. The lengthy, but necessary task of involving teachers and other relevant stakeholders to assume ownership of the curriculum and its processes should also be considered carefully when planning such an initiative, while the challenges of making the transition to the new curriculum through monitoring, supervision, and feedback must also be addressed.

Further information

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4.22 Financial literacy scheme, Jamaica

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| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Financial literacy |
| Other issues addressed | To create solid foundation for the formation of wise long-term financial habits through a student-tailored programme |
| Level of initiative | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: Changing the behaviour of students when it comes to making financial decisions by increasing their financial knowledge, and enabling them to unlearn unwise financial habits and relearn appropriate ones before detrimental mistakes are made.

Objectives: (a) to examine the role that money plays in achieving lifelong personal goals; (b) to make informed financial decisions; and (c) to enable students to protect themselves against financial pitfalls.

Outputs: Through pre-test and post-test analysis, weekly observation of programme sessions by teachers and by staff of the Financial Services Commission (FSC)⁶⁵, essay competitions and student testimonials, it was shown that the knowledge base among the participants had increased.

Outcomes: The habits of saving and budgeting as well as the transfer of information from students to parents (which was encouraged during programme delivery) have indicated that so far the programme has been successful.

Even though it is well documented that improved financial literacy, particularly early in life, results in a higher standard of living over the long term, including retirement, research indicates that young people believe that financial choices and responsibilities are for adults. Research also shows that young people determine their attitudes about handling money by the time they finish Grade 5.

The same study indicates that teenagers aged 13 to 18 are spending money like adults, but are unaware of the possible consequences of their choices. Approximately one-third of teens surveyed admit owing money to a person or company.

In compliance with Commonwealth requirements for train the trainer initiatives, and research indicating a low level of financial knowledge among young people, the scheme was developed as a behavioural change initiative. Participants were selected from secondary schools, where structure and resource support already existed for the effective running of the programme.

About 70 per cent of participants were girls, and 50 per cent of participants were from single-parent households, who attended inner-city schools that have a low performing reputation. Within the communities of these schools, two in five adults were currently unemployed.

Implementation and challenges

The initiative was fully financed (materials, transportation stipend for facilitators, field trip costs, incentives for the students, etc.) by the FSC⁶⁶ and the resource materials and the acquiring/facilitating of school contacts was done by Junior Achievement Jamaica (JAJ).⁶⁷

The facilitators/volunteers were those who had previously worked with the Commonwealth Programme that was implemented by the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication,

at The University of the West Indies (). Schools provided the venue, technological resources, etc. Other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the project were the Bank of Jamaica and the Jamaican Stock Market, which provided field trip sites.

The JAJ organisation contacted the Ministry of Education (MoE) for endorsement and access to schools. The endorsement was made easier, as the scheme was held outside school hours, which in turn facilitated the participation of the different stakeholders.

One challenge that delayed the delivery of the programme was co-ordinating its implementation with school personnel, due to competing activities in schools and intermittent disruptions in school schedules (e.g. holidays, other school events). Posters and the public presentation of certificates of participation at the schools assisted in promoting the initiative. The public media launch and the closing ceremony, where the Minister of Education was the guest speaker, also helped in promotion. Articles on the event and awardees were printed in the media.

The Commonwealth's manuals on financial literacy were integrated with the programme materials of the Junior Achievement Programme on finance. In terms of modifications to the Commonwealth's manual, the session on investment was widened to include low-risk and high-risk investment options. This introduced investment ideas in addition to the business planning session, as well as the risks involved, so that the options could be utilised earlier for wealth generation and long-term planning.

A session on identity theft was included as part of risk management and as a response to the growing crime in Jamaica. Cultural songs (modelled from the music industry) were developed to reinforce the concepts taught and to aid in the formation and retention of healthy financial habits. Field trips to financial institutions were included in the programme as well as an essay competition on the importance of budgeting.

In implementing a similar programme elsewhere, it is important that the Ministry of Education be a partner. In the future, teachers and/or guidance counsellors within the education system as well as members of the banking sector will be sought out to implement similar projects. It was also decided that time should be set aside to strengthen key concepts.

Basic cultural integration activities should be done with all trainers, to ensure that all students are exposed in a similar creative fashion, especially for trainers who are not gifted musically or with skills in drama. State endorsement and more beneficial partnerships and support (financial, material, people resources) will assist further in the programme's implementation.

Curriculum integration must be encouraged in order to guarantee greater reach and long-term support and to alleviate financial challenges arising from a disjointed approach. Savings programmes and financial literacy clubs must be established in schools to ensure the sustainability of learning and behavioural change.

Lessons learned must be shared through regular discussion forums (local, regional and international) among groups/NGOs/schemes, to easily disseminate successful practices and offer support. Standardised surveys and evaluation methodologies must be developed to generate comparable data, monitor progress towards goals and provide a reference point for further impact evaluation assessments.

Further information

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4.23 Free education at all levels, in all areas, St Kitts and Nevis

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Resources |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Enhancing quality education |
| Other issues addressed | Improving school performance, and increasing teacher accountability |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary Tertiary Marginalised youth |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: Increasing the quality and quantity of educational output.

Objectives: To increase availability of and improve access to free education.

Outputs: Increased attendance, greater regularity of attendance and improved student performance.

Outcomes: Parents, teachers and community leaders value the reduction in truancy and the increase in students' academic levels.

The Government of St Kitts and Nevis has moved beyond the usual provisions of free tuition, furniture and facilities, to providing grants: free uniforms, lunches, transportation and examination fees for all students. Its success to date facilitates the work of the education system in meeting national objectives.

Implementation and challenges

The chief education officer (CEO), assisted by education officers, principals, teachers and parents, oversees the daily operation of this initiative. The responsible education officers and others report periodically to the CEO, and together they discuss and make decisions relating to monitoring, evaluation, benchmarks and mechanisms for success and improvement.

The Ministry of Education notes that, although financial constraints have restrained the capacity of the education sector to implement and sustain the programme, non-state organisations have helped alleviate this financial challenge, to some extent.

St Kitts and Nevis advises countries considering similar initiatives to consult with other jurisdictions to learn from international experiences, challenges and best practices. Further, the ministry recommends strongly that programme processes will need to ensure that benefits for individuals are limited to those genuinely in need.

Further information

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4.24 Green Skills Agreement, Australia

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Skills for sustainability ⁶⁸ |
| Level of initiative | Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Community members Employers and existing workers in sectors impacted by the move to a low-carbon economy including carbon-exposed industries, the building industry and the clean energy sector |

Initiative aims

Goal: Build the capacity of the vocational education and training (VET) sector to deliver the skills for sustainability required in the workplace that will enable individuals, businesses and communities to adjust to, and prosper in, a sustainable, low-carbon economy.

Objectives: The Green Skills Agreement (Australian Government, 2009b) is a statement of the commitment of the Australian and state and territory governments to work collaboratively with employer and employee representatives, the vocational and education training sector and community organisations to ensure that training in, and the delivery of, skills for sustainability is an integral part of all vocational education and training and is relevant to the needs of industry.

The Agreement has four key objectives:

- (a) developing national standards in skills for sustainability within the requirements of the national regulatory framework;
- (b) up-skilling VET practitioners so they can provide effective training and facilitation in skills for sustainability;
- (c) strategic review of training packages (sets of nationally endorsed standards and qualifications for recognising and assessing people's skills) to embed sustainability knowledge, skills and principles; and
- (d) implementing a transition strategy to re-skill vulnerable workers.

Outputs: Major achievements to date include the following.

- (a) skills for sustainability have been embedded in training packages and work is now proceeding on the development of resource materials to support the delivery of new and revised units of competency and qualifications;
- (b) 1.1million Australian dollar (A\$) national VET skills for sustainability professional development programme for VET practitioners is building the capability of registered training organisations (RTOs) to deliver skills for sustainability training; and
- (c) research has been undertaken identifying training and sustainable employment opportunities for vulnerable workers in two specific regions: the indigenous population of Murdi Paaki in New South Wales, and existing workers in carbon-exposed industries in the La Trobe Valley, Victoria.

Outcomes: To date, the greatest positive changes have been the embedding of skills for sustainability in hundreds of units of competency (the skills and knowledge to operate effectively in employment, and their application), and the commencement of training to up-skill VET practitioners to ensure effective delivery of skills for sustainability.

Implementation and challenges

As Australia moves to a low-carbon, clean energy future there is an increasing need for workers, including tradespeople and professionals in key industries, to have high-quality, integrated sustainability skills to ensure they can provide the necessary knowledge, advice, products and services to businesses and individuals. An essential element in successfully transitioning to a low-carbon economy is ensuring an appropriately skilled and responsive workforce; embedding skills for sustainability in Australia's national VET training system is critical in achieving this aim.

This transition requires new skills, the application of existing skills to new technologies and practices, and new ways of thinking, working and doing business across all areas of the economy and society. The Green Skills Agreement is focused on building the capacity of the VET sector to deliver the required skills. More than 1.7 million Australians participate in VET each year through a national network of over 4,000 public and private registered training providers.

The Australian government is supporting implementation of the Green Skills Agreement through a budget allocation of A\$5.3 million over four years from 2010–11. Responsibility for administration of these funds, including project selection processes and quality assurance, rests with the Australian Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

Implementation of the initiative is overseen by an implementation group which includes representatives from all state and territory jurisdictions, the VET and higher education sectors, private training providers, adult community education providers, industry and unions. The implementation group is currently developing an evaluation framework for future reporting and evaluation activities.

Engagement by industry sectors has varied depending on their business imperatives and views about the importance of skills for sustainability. Industries where the impact of the move to a low-carbon economy is immediate and pressing from a business perspective have been more proactive and willing to embrace change, and to explore innovative approaches to addressing changing skill requirements.

Industries where the impact is less immediate have generally been slower to address potential future skill requirements. Continuing to engage with these industries is an ongoing process and making changes to relevant training packages is expected to be a slower, iterative process.

Further information

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4.25 Human Resource, Knowledge and Arts Development Fund, Mauritius

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| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Access to tertiary education, irrespective of financial status |
| Other issues addressed | Loan guarantees |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Since 2005, the growth of private post-secondary institutions has been very rapid. The challenge for Mauritius has been to ensure the quality of higher education at a national level, to safeguard the interests of the different stakeholders, and to widen access to tertiary education.

Objectives: To have one graduate per family and increase the gross tertiary enrolment ratio from 4.5 per cent (in 2010) to 7 per cent by 2015.

Outputs: Enrolment has increased as students from disadvantaged groups are increasingly enrolled in full-time tertiary education.

Outcomes: Between the creation of the fund (in July 2008) to December 2011, a total of 1,119 scholarships have been awarded to needy students, and 169 loan guarantees provided.

The Human Resource, Knowledge and Arts Development Fund (HRKADF) is one of the means by which the Government of Mauritius is aiming to increase the access of underprivileged students to higher education. Under this scheme, students can apply for either a loan or a scholarship to pursue tertiary education.

The scholarship is focused on poor students (within a certain income limit). Over and above that limit, students can seek the assistance of the government to sponsor them for a loan which they can contract with any financial institution or commercial banks.

Implementation and challenges

The HRKADF initiative is widely advertised in the local press and on the website of the Ministry of Education, and all institutions are also made aware of the scheme. Applications are normally forwarded to the Ministry of Education, which subsequently submits these to a committee for consideration.

The scholarship covers the cost of tuition fees, books, examination fees and a maximum monthly stipend of 3000 Mauritian rupees (MRs) (US\$100), subject to a maximum of MRs150,000 (US\$5,000) per academic year over the duration of the course, in a Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) registered institution.

The loan guarantee covers a principal amount of MRs150,000 for students from Mauritius and MRs210,000 (US\$7,000) for students from Rodrigues and Outer Islands, per year.

For other countries considering a scheme similar to Mauritius' HRKADF, the TEC advises ensuring the financial sustainability of such a scheme, as a reduction in funds could jeopardise the initiative. If Mauritius were to repeat or revise the initiative, brand-name institutions could be exempted from following procedures and regulations for registration and accreditation – at the discretion of the regulatory body.

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4.26 ICT professional development strategy for teachers, Guyana

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Alternative |
| Main issue addressed | Professional development of teachers |
| Other issues addressed | Technology |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers |
| | School leaders |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Identify a rapid, cost-effective way to enhance and overhaul existing teacher education systems.
- Outputs:** To date 3,000 teachers have been trained in basic ICT literacy, with a further 450 using the modules developed. Other education sector personnel have also been trained.
- Outcomes:** Ministry of Education (MoE) officials, teacher development management and staff, school principals, and teachers are competent to harness ICT effectively to support high-quality teaching and learning in Guyanese schools, with:
- (a) most able to integrate the use of basic ICT tools into the standard school curriculum, pedagogy, and classroom structures as well as management tasks and to support professional development; and
 - (b) a critical mass of personnel able to use more sophisticated methodologies and technologies in which the teacher serves as a guide and manager of the learning environment, and in which students are engaged in extended, collaborative project-based learning activities that can go beyond the classroom and may involve local or global collaborations.

The quality of both primary and secondary education in Guyana has been questioned recently, and research suggests it is only at the tertiary level that functional literacy is acquired. This situation has been attributed in part to the low retention of qualified teachers and the subsequent employment of untrained and unqualified teachers.⁶⁹ In response, the MoE has prioritised increasing the number of qualified teachers by providing opportunities for both pre- and in-service teachers to gain accreditation.

The ICT Professional Development Strategy for Teachers in Guyana initiative offers a rapid, cost-effective way to enhance and overhaul existing teacher education systems in environments with few resources and limited human capacity. Information and communications technology is being used to advantage by accessing good quality free resources such as curriculum frameworks, teaching and learning resources, and other online tools. The strategy also acknowledges the central role that education officials, teacher trainers, school managers and educators play for this to be realised.

Implementation and challenges

The strategy, and initiatives required to implement it, were developed in consultation with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth of Learning, Microsoft, and Neil Butcher and Associates, in conjunction with the National Centre for Educational Resource Development, the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) and the University of Guyana (UG).

The strategy is essentially a comprehensive framework and learning pathway for education stakeholders to become competent in harnessing ICT to support high-quality teaching and learning, and shares the broader vision of the Guyana MoE's ICT Operational Plan.

Initiatives identified in the strategy include:

1. revising the teacher education curriculum to incorporate ICT components at different stages of initial and in-service training, including subject-specific focuses for secondary education;
2. creating a suite of ICT integration courses aimed at school management, as well as courses for ICT school co-ordinators, and technical training for ICT maintenance and support personnel; and
3. introducing ICT awareness and capacity building initiatives designed for education stakeholders at ministerial and teacher education level.

In developing the new curriculum, the team used a method that proved quick and inexpensive to implement, but which resulted in a comprehensive professional development ICT programme. By adopting and reworking the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) (UNESCO, 2011) the curriculum revision and materials development team was able to develop a curriculum that created a logical flow between courses run at CPCE and at UG.

In developing materials and activities to support the UNESCO competencies, the development team optimised free and open education resources. Although they did very little repurposing of these resources, they created sets of student activities designed to contextualise the readings, and sets of facilitation guides to assist the implementation of the programme.

The Guyana initiative demonstrates that digital resources and technologies can be used effectively as a catalyst for educational change. Potential benefits that can be derived from making the most of digital tools and content are significant – and can enhance teaching and learning, administration and communication. However, the Guyana Ministry of Education realised that the core of this transformation was not the technology itself, but rather the people expected to use it.

In countries where resources and human capacity are at a premium, the potential for the programme (or similar) to transfer is promising. While acknowledging the capital-intensive nature in funding the necessary infrastructure, the training, curriculum review and materials' development processes can be achieved cost effectively – because of the availability of good quality free and open resources and tools.

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4.27 Improved access to secondary and tertiary education for all learners, Grenada

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Equity |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Education for all with improved services |
| Other issues addressed | Expansion, refurbishment or construction of a number of primary schools and upgrading of equipment |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary Tertiary Vocational |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Universal access to and participation in education for all citizens.

Objectives: (a) to ensure that there is adequate provision for children with special needs; and
(b) to develop enabling conditions for full participation of at-risk and excluded children within the context of gender parity.

Outputs: (a) increased numbers of children enrolled at secondary schools;
(b) improvement of student performance in some subject areas; and
(c) more students in the job market with employable skills.

Outcomes: Increased earning capacity among young people.

Implementation and challenges

Grenada believes that secondary education is the key to poverty alleviation and economic growth through employment. Financial concerns limit initiatives, and the country is still dependent to a degree on foreign monetary aid.

The focus on the quality of education in primary and pre-school is largely due to the high level of access available to people in Grenada. A number of components to enhance quality have been identified, such as teacher training, procurement of learning materials, accountability for student performance, improved student performance, parental involvement, teacher qualification and conduct, provision of textbook and transportation allowances, and a revised curriculum.

Several teachers have been provided with scholarships to study at bachelor's degree level, but the impact of training is yet to be seen. The revised curriculum taps into the various interests and strengths of students; thus, students gain motivation and the desire to stay in school and participate. Free school books have allowed for greater participation in school and at home.

Teacher performance standards remain a big challenge, which adversely affects children and school performance. There is no structure in place to cater for the termination of employment, except in matters that have nothing to do with classroom performance. This makes it difficult to address poor teacher performance.

Another pertinent issue lies with the increasing number of students eligible for secondary education and the lack of facilities to manage them. As the region has given the mandate

that all students should have access to secondary schooling, a two-fold problem emerges: a secondary cohort, older than the usual age range for each grade, evolves; and students are forced to work above their ability. These issues are exacerbated by a lack of training and efficiency among teachers.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development has a dedicated project unit, headed by a senior education officer, and responsible for implementation of the World Bank-financed Basic Education Reform Project. Two existing sub-units with a general Ministry of Education mandate have been incorporated in the unit – maintenance and school supplies.

The project unit has specific responsibility for:

- co-ordinating the implementation of the Basic Education Reform Project;
- ensuring proper monitoring (procurement and accountancy) of the project;
- preparing the requisite project implementation reports;
- ensuring the maintenance of all school facilities; and
- ensuring procurement and distribution of school furniture, equipment, materials and supplies.

Grenada's education authorities believe that there is a need to focus on training and technical expertise in the future. The lack of sustained funding is a constant challenge, as is the lack of available subjects in high priority areas. Infrastructure also needs to be addressed in order for educational reforms to move forward.

Recent **Commonwealth of Learning (COL)** activities with Grenada have covered a variety of areas in all sectors. Grenada has participated in meetings and workshops to examine quality assurance indicators for improvements in teacher education, to develop open educational resources (OERs), and e-learning and educational technologies. COL has supported media development to assist farmers; and learners in Grenada have benefited from the development of a Special Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for practising teachers. Grenada has taken part also in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth. The country also participated in the annual meetings of the Caribbean chief education officers, and the COL continues to work with Grenada on the regional priorities identified by Caribbean chief education officers.

Further information

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4.28 Improvement of education through the use of ICT, St Vincent and the Grenadines

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Integration of ICT into the curriculum |
| Other issues addressed | Equity in education |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goals: The main goal of the integration process is to create a more engaging atmosphere for students thereby focussing on their needs within the classroom. It is anticipated that the integration of digital technology will improve the levels of literacy and numeracy among pupils thereby improving the overall learning outcomes, as teachers are able to work with pupils at their different attainment levels.

Objectives: An objective of the ICT integration process is that of improving the operations at the Ministry of Education through change management. This process is being facilitated through the creation of a web portal known as SVGeNet (Education Portal of St Vincent and The Grenadines). The medium will allow for improved communication between the ministry and institutions, and also improve data processing through digital technologies as opposed to the extant paper-based means.

Outputs: Currently both the 'Improvement of education through the use of communication technology' and the government's One Laptop Per Child Initiative are now ending the implementation process. Consequently, it is too soon to assess impact.

Outcomes: While acknowledging the early stages in the implementation of both initiatives, general observations indicate higher levels of motivation among students in using the technology. This is evident in clusters of pupils working together at the various wi-fi hotspots or in their communities using their laptops.

The integration of ICT into the pedagogical process represents an essential paradigm shift from a teacher-centred classroom to a student-oriented one. It is hoped that student motivation and enthusiasm will increase through the innovative approaches being employed. Consequently, this should result in higher levels of achievement than previously experienced using traditional methods.

Implementation and challenges

The Improvement of Education Through the Use of Information Communication Technology initiative is targeted at providing the necessary hardware and training to modify classrooms to a modernised learning environment.

Initially, based on the available space, each primary school was afforded eight desktop computers so that computer laboratories could be established, while others with spatial constraints were given eight laptops and a docking station to both store and recharge the units.

Secondary schools were provided with 30 desktops and two laptops each. Additionally, all schools were given heavy-duty printers, LCD projectors and scanners, while smart boards are being piloted in selected institutions.

Under the project, teachers were also provided with training in areas such as technological integration in the classroom, the use of online resources and the use of software to improve pedagogy. The learning process is also enriched by a concurrent implementation of the National Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's project.

Through this government department, wireless internet connectivity was provided to all educational institutions throughout the country, via revenues collected from internet service providers. Hence, pupils who were previously underserved are now able to access online resources with greater ease.

The ICT integration process is further strengthened by the government's One Laptop Per Child initiative. This intervention is particularly important as it has equipped pupils with the ability to learn more through independent research at their leisure. Hence, there is greater equity through this intervention, as pupils who had no means of accessing digital technology are able to do so in relative ease and comfort, thereby bridging the digital divide.

One of the main challenges facing both initiatives is the acquisition of personnel for the maintenance and upkeep of equipment throughout the country. Given the volume of equipment to be maintained and the geographic distances involved, it is a challenge to respond to the increasing demands made by the respective institutions with limited access to technical staff. Currently the ICT unit needs to be expanded if it is to respond to the ongoing requests for maintenance and repair of equipment in schools.

Another point of concern in the integration process is that of motivating some educators to embrace the new means of delivery. Attitude modification meets with some resistance, as some teachers are hesitant to utilise the technology as this may reflect their deficiencies in various areas, or it may also indicate that some pupils may be more technologically aware.

The issue of content management and appropriate usage is also a prime concern for ministry personnel. Efforts are continuing to monitor student usage of ICT equipment in order to prevent, as much as possible, access to content which is unsuitable.

For other countries considering the introduction of technology similar to the St Vincent and the Grenadines' initiative, the nation's Education Ministry recommends that it should be done on a phased basis to allow for the monitoring and correction of potential problems.

As these issues are resolved, the process could be expanded with greater efficiency. Furthermore, as much as possible, educators should be comprehensively trained in the use of ICT equipment and minor repairs – so as not to inundate technical staff.

Where possible, an ICT policy should be developed in the initial phases of the integration process. This policy should guide what is accepted by donors and the appropriate means of usage. By minimising the variation in technology brands, it should be possible to reduce overall maintenance costs. Support services should be afforded greater training and familiarisation with the equipment which is being procured. Also, considering the volume of equipment being acquired, departmental resources may need to be strengthened.

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4.29 Improving Cook Islands education – a learning and teaching approach, Cook Islands

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Equity |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | An integrated and holistic approach to education |
| Other issues addressed | Student achievement |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders |

Initiative aims

Goal: Increase student achievement, engagement and enjoyment of learning through enhanced teaching practices.

Objective: To achieve an integrated and holistic education system.

Outputs: Teachers are beginning to utilise a student-centred approach, and are more energised and enthusiastic due to the implementation of new pedagogies, allowing them greater freedom to display creativity, innovation and initiative. Observations of classrooms clearly display the ongoing benefits in students' enjoyment and engagement.

Outcomes: Teaching practice has improved and teachers are beginning to become more aware of their role in the development of a child's holistic learning. Education administrators have witnessed a more contextualised approach to teaching and learning – students are learning concepts within a context they are likely to be familiar with, and staff at the Ministry of Education are adopting a more collaborative approach to supporting teachers, allowing for innovative approaches to learning and teaching to develop. (These changes are being measured through interviews, observations, feedback, questionnaires and surveys.)

The Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2008–2023 (EMP) establishes a strategic direction for education and includes the following focus areas:

- *Taku Ipukarea Kia Rangatira* (language, culture and perspectives and aspirations of Cook Islands people and their role in the region and internationally);
- learning and teaching;
- learning and the community; and
- infrastructure and support.

The EMP maintains the learner at the centrepoint and focuses on learning for life, as the strategic vision for education in Cook Islands.

To achieve this vision, gaps in teacher pedagogical knowledge and the need for an integrated and holistic approach to learning are being addressed. Other changes within Cook Islands education that needed attention include the removal of corporal punishment (addressed through ministry directives and now a bill for legislation), necessitating alternative management practices; and the need for cross-curricular delivery of learning and teaching.

The plan to address the above issues was designed and implemented by the Ministry of Education's senior management team and school support division, which is responsible for the provision and support of the professional development needs of schools. This division historically includes curriculum advisors who assist principals and teachers with specific curriculum knowledge, as well as implementation of good practice.

As part of this new initiative, the position of learning and teaching advisors has been created. The learning and teaching advisors' role was designed to put an emphasis on best practice mechanisms by which any curriculum content can be delivered. The advisors work collaboratively to provide effective strategies and pedagogies that support teachers to increase student achievement, engagement and enjoyment of learning.

In effect, the new advisors emphasise the 'how' rather than the 'what' of learning and teaching. Initially three learning and teaching advisor positions were made available in 2011. The appointment of two further positions for 2012 will increase the capacity of this initiative.

Funding for the initiative came from the Cook Islands government and is managed by the Ministry of Education; supplementary funds are derived from the New Zealand Aid Programme. The government budget covers personnel and operational expenditure; the NZ Aid Programme covers associated activities, as identified in the initiative's business plan.

Ultimately, the students and citizens of Cook Islands are the ones who will benefit from this initiative through teachers becoming more knowledgeable in effective pedagogies. As the delivery of education improves, so too should the benefits to Cook Islands' society, through increased opportunities and employment prospects. Producing students who are at ease in twenty-first century environments will lead to creative individuals who can contribute to society – in ways that are not yet imagined.

Implementation and challenges

To date, 22 of 29 Cook Islands' primary and secondary schools have been involved in the learning and teaching professional development initiative aimed at improving teaching practice. The learning and teaching advisors have focused mainly on the pedagogies of differentiated learning, integrated learning and assessment for learning, but have also supported educators with a range of other strategies, including:

- behaviour management;
- compliance, governance and management at a senior management level;
- the use of ICT in learning and teaching;
- inquiry learning, planning, and the use of academic language in assessments;
- the development of a creative teacher's professional learning community; and
- encouraging teachers to share and collaborate within and beyond schools, through clusters and an online network of Cook Islands educators.

Professional development for teachers to date has included seminars, workshops, in-house and off-site sessions, as well as whole school, syndicate, departments, small groups, clusters, online or one-on-one skilling.

The major challenges faced in implementing the initiative were identified as:

- (a) *Providing and sustaining quality professional support to Pa Enua (outer islands) schools, given the challenges of distance and isolation.*

Overcoming this challenge proved to be difficult. With such large distances involved as well as irregular and expensive travel options, getting advisors to these islands is often prohibitive. One way the learning and teaching advisors overcame this was to utilise ICT, particularly Skype, email and internet sites. Schools were encouraged to contact advisors via Skype (messaging or video calls), email, or to dialogue via a forum set up by the learning and teaching advisors. This forum, created for Cook Islands educators, is designed to supplement and expand on information provided during professional development sessions. It also encourages dialogue between Cook Islands educators to create a co-operative and collegial education community where the sharing of ideas benefits all.

- (b) *Overcoming ingrained, historical teaching practices that no longer meet the needs of twenty-first century learners.*

To address this challenge, professional development provided by the learning and teaching advisors needed to be relevant, seen as useful, easily implemented and sustainable. This was achieved by providing professional development in targeted pedagogies, gradually, and with each meeting, introducing slightly more in-depth information on how to implement the pedagogy. This involved integrating theoretical and practical advice so that teachers were not too overwhelmed by the new ideas. Another important aspect considered when delivering professional development was to ensure teachers and principals saw that they were already doing aspects of the introduced strategy, to encourage building on steps already taken to implement a particular pedagogy. Ongoing support for professional development was provided by regular dialogue between the advisors and school principals. Advisors also encouraged contact with individuals or groups of teachers who required further support. The learning and teaching advisors were very aware of the need to make the support provided ongoing, and therefore worked on a model for providing sustainable professional development.

The Cook Islands Ministry of Education advises any other countries considering such an initiative to accept that change takes time and requires a supportive environment. Teachers need time to allow them to absorb new information and then implement it within a supportive environment, when they feel confident in their ability to succeed. However, modelling of strategies may help through the process of changing learning and teaching practice.

If Cook Islands were to repeat the initiative, it would ensure leaders in the schools were well aware of the critical part they play in confirming that professional development initiatives are successfully embedded into teaching practice. Ongoing support and follow-up by school leaders makes a significant difference in whether a professional development initiative is implemented successfully – or not.

Further information

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4.30 Improving numeracy, South Africa

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| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Alternative |
| Main issue addressed | School improvement |
| Other issues addressed | To address ongoing poor performance in mathematics at all levels |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Combat ongoing poor performance in mathematics at all levels.
- Objectives:** To complete and identify potential strategies from a five-year research and development project focused on improving primary mathematics teaching and learning and, from that, performance.
- Outputs:** Too early to report at this stage as the project is in its first year.
- Outcomes:** Building a focus around primary mathematics teaching and learning within the University of the Witwatersrand and more broadly in Gauteng Province, as well as within project schools for the initiative's development work.

This project is a five-year research and development project funded jointly by the First Rand Foundation, Anglo American, Rand Merchant Bank, the Department of Science and Technology, and is administered by the National Research Foundation (NRF). It involves supporting ten disadvantaged primary schools in one district in the development of numeracy and mathematics teaching, and improving numeracy and mathematics skills in these schools.

Implementation and challenges

The Witwatersrand (Wits) School of Education numeracy project began in 2011 and will operate until the end of 2015. Although based in ten primary schools in the Johannesburg East district, it works in collaboration with a range of both district and provincial-level personnel.

The focus in the initiative's first two years will be on building number sense in the foundation phase, by working with both teachers and learners across the ten schools.

The project leader, using extensive experience in both teaching and lecturing in the field of mathematics education in the UK and South Africa, is being supported by a small team of postgraduate students and lecturing staff from the School of Education, all of whom have expertise in primary mathematics.

In order for the project to function efficiently, labour-intensive negotiations with school principals and teachers and liaison with district and provincial level personnel have been required.

Further information

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4.31 Improving quality of teaching and learning, Malaysia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Increasing the number of PhD graduates |
| Other issues addressed | Access to higher education |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Allow higher education institutions to improve human capital.

Output: Improved quality of teaching and learning.

Outcomes: Greater awareness among students, lecturers and researchers of the need for knowledge generation and community development.

One of the main challenges in the Malaysian higher education sector is to produce graduates who aspire to be first class, and have that approach to their studies. Such a graduate will be able to multi-task; serve the public and the community; contribute effectively to the development of the community; and at the same time become one of the nation's leaders to manage the national development programme.

Implementation and challenges

Continuous review and improvement of the curriculum is undertaken so that it gains relevance and fulfils the stipulated learning outcomes. It is also important to acknowledge those who have attained high quality in teaching and learning. Strengthening of the student evaluation system is also being undertaken in order to enhance learning outcomes.

Malaysia is currently engaged in providing a funding mechanism to meet the target of 60,000 PhD qualifications by 2020. Nevertheless, provision of sufficient funding still remains the major challenge to be faced. In encouraging other countries to invest in higher education, Malaysia advises that is vital to keep updating the curriculum to ensure relevance in the rapidly changing world of education.

Further information

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4.32 Improving Reception Year practitioners' professional competence, South Africa

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Improving the implementation of the Grade R year in foundation phase classrooms (through the University of the Witwatersrand) |
| Other issues addressed | Linking theory to practice and ongoing professional development |
| Level of initiative | Adult/continuing Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Enable Grade R practitioners to implement an appropriate and effective quality early learning programme in the Grade R year.⁷⁰

Objectives: (a) to enable practitioners to implement the national curriculum statement;
(b) to enable practitioners to make the necessary adjustments to their practice to ensure they are meeting national requirements, while at the same time implementing an appropriate Grade R programme.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date arising from the initiative include:

- (a) increased teacher professionalism;
- (b) improved teaching practices in the classroom; and
- (c) roll-out of the course to other organisations.

The facilitators who were involved in the implementation of the Grade R training have also expressed enthusiasm and motivation, and acknowledged changes to their own practice. The project leaders also have found it to be a 'rewarding, but humbling' experience.

Outcomes: Grade R practitioners have indicated that they found the course to be stimulating and beneficial, and it has enabled them to improve their practice. Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) district officials report that the practitioners who have attended the course are more positive about their practice, that there is evidence of improved implementation and that they have more confidence. Grade R practitioners who were not selected to do the course have been motivated to be accepted into the course.⁷¹

The majority of Grade R practitioners are unqualified or underqualified. There are huge challenges in ensuring the appropriate implementation of Grade R learning programmes. This initiative has attempted to enable practitioners to deepen their understanding of effective Grade R practice and to implement more child-friendly Grade R programmes.

For many Grade R children, this stage is their first exposure to any form of organised schooling. It is imperative that children be immersed in appropriate learning experiences from an early age that will support successful formal learning and enable them to succeed at school.

Implementation and challenges

This initiative was requested by the GDE because of the difficulties that the GDE had encountered with the rollout of the Grade R year. The initiative comprises a seven-module, interactive course aimed at increasing the professional competence of Grade R practitioners.

The course material was written by a core team of three, although suggestions provided by facilitators and practitioners were included in the material. This collaborative approach

enabled the material to be contextually relevant for the practitioners. The delivery model followed was a decentralised one, and two of the course designers subsequently became project leaders.

Before the delivery of a module, the project leaders held an orientation session with the facilitators who were qualified early childhood teachers. The facilitators, in turn, mediated this material to the practitioners during their school holidays. The focus was on appropriate early learning methodologies informed by simple explanations of the theoretical underpinning, and an emphasis on self-reflective practice encouraged practitioners to share their ideas and experiences.

After engaging with a specific module, practitioners were expected to apply what they had learned to the classroom situation. Feedback and support were given at a following training session, while during the training periods, the course designers visited each training centre to offer support and to monitor the training.

GDE district officials who monitor classroom practice and are responsible for quality assurance have suggested that participation in the course has led to improved implementation. There were some challenges, however: practitioners had to attend training during their school holidays; this was initially met with resentment. Nevertheless, the interactive model, which acknowledged practitioners' experiences, afforded them voice and agency – and they participated enthusiastically.

Language was also a significant challenge. Again, an interactive teaching mode, making use of peer teaching and code switching⁷² proved to be effective. Many of the facilitators could communicate with the practitioners in their home language, and this was also helpful.

During training, tea and lunch were provided. Surprisingly, the quality of the food became one of the initiatives' largest challenges. When organisers explored possible reasons for the practitioners' discontent, they discovered that the food grievances were closely linked to perceived notions of disrespect, and to external factors such as their conditions of service and lack of formal qualifications.

The completion of the assessment criteria also proved problematic. However, by viewing assessment as a developmental tool and offering practitioners ongoing support, the assessment tasks became less challenging. Providing opportunities to improve the tasks after consultation with facilitators also meant that practitioners grew in confidence and competence.

The Grade R Practitioners' Course organisers found it extremely time-consuming and demanding to write course materials (which had to be completed over a five-month period) and to oversee implementation. However, the response of the participants made it very worthwhile.

Further advice from the programme managers is to work collaboratively with all parties involved in the training. In South Africa's case, facilitators and practitioners took ownership of the material and the training, and this encouraged participation and commitment to the course. Increasing the time allowed for each model is expected to provide greater success and to improve the programme, by providing a mentorship model where a mentor works with practitioners in their classrooms.

Further information

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4.33 Improving school leadership, United Republic of Tanzania

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Devolution |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Inspection of schools and support to teachers |
| Other issues addressed | Remedial training where needed |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders |

Initiative aims

Goal: Quality assurance in education provision.

Objectives: To improve teachers' accountability and competence in the classroom.

Outputs: Increased numbers of heads of schools trained and of quality assurance documents published.

Outcomes: Improved performance of students academically, with relevant and necessary skills.

Implementation and challenges

To ensure effective quality mechanisms in schools, heads of schools and education co-ordinators have been given adequate skills and checklists to conduct individual school site supervision, instead of depending entirely on school inspectors to perform the task. Nevertheless, a shortage of skilled staff and adequate financial resources has proved to be challenging in implementing the initiative.

Tanzania advises other education systems considering devolving school inspection and related activities to the school level to emphasise the importance of effective in-service training for teachers and pedagogical leaders; and to ensure quality training for school administrators.

Further information

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4.34 Increasing the number of participants in community colleges' programmes, Malaysia

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Alternative |
| Main issue addressed | Widening participation in community colleges |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary Vocational training Marginalised youth Multi-sector |
| Target beneficiaries | Technical education and training Post-secondary students Community members Workers from neighbouring industries University graduates |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Develop quality workers by providing them with training to meet the demands of the high income economy of the future.
- Objectives:** To equip students and learners with living skills so that they are independent, able to earn a living and ultimately improve their standard of living.
- Outputs:** Improved enrolment and participation rates by local communities (both rural and urban).
- Outcomes:** Since the modular programmes are only into the second year of implementation, the outcomes are not evident at this stage. Like any other new programmes, there have been some teething problems and issues at the start, but such problems are not expected to continue beyond 2013. Refining and fine tuning of the modular programmes are ongoing.

It is necessary to minimise the gap in access to post-secondary/tertiary education, as a considerable number of school leavers start work after Form 5 without additional educational qualifications. As a result, they are less skilled and are likely to receive lower incomes.

In 2011 for example, of 468,000 Form 5 school leavers, fewer than 20,000 students were able to gain placements at local public and private higher educational institutions such as universities and university colleges. This indicates that the majority of school leavers will face considerable difficulty in gaining places at higher educational institutions, if they do not consider alternative pathways to further education and training.

Malaysia launched the economic transformation plan A Road Map for Malaysia, in 2011. The plan proposes that Malaysia should become a high-income advanced nation that is both inclusive and sustainable by 2020. Within the context of the broader education system, the initiative is a continuation of Education for All and the democratisation of education goals at the tertiary level.

Malaysia has to produce adequate skilled human capital to move the nation towards attaining advanced national and high-income status. In translating the national plan into action at the community colleges level therefore, there is a need to ensure that everyone can gain access to tertiary education to address the existing skills gap.

Unless there is a focus on increasing access and equity in tertiary education through the establishment of community colleges, the national agenda may not be attained, as the skills gap may persist and the demand by industry for more skilled workers may not be matched by the supply of skilled workers.

As institutions that emphasise lifelong learning, community colleges widen post-secondary access options and contribute towards achieving improved equity in tertiary education.

The core mission of the community colleges is to elevate the socio-economic status and well-being of society at large, through training and skills acquisition. Community colleges are committed to developing knowledgeable and skilled communities, able to serve the needs and priorities of the knowledge economy.

Implementation and challenges

In order to implement the initiative in community colleges, action plans to increase the intake of community college students nationwide have been drawn up. One plan involves increasing the number of intakes per year from two to four times a year (January, April, July and October) to facilitate students from local communities enrolling in these colleges.

Interested participants are encouraged to apply online or by simply walking into local colleges. Promotional exercises (in the form of aggressive advertising campaigns through all media modes) inform communities about the programmes being offered at community colleges, and are being enhanced to attract students from all ages and walks of life.

Likewise, the community college curriculum is continuously being reviewed with inputs from industry through consultation forums, during the course of the year. In 2010, community colleges began offering modular programmes to benefit all learner types, including school leavers as well as workers from industry.

These modular programmes are stand-alone programmes, allowing open entry and open exit, thereby enabling easy access to attaining skills. The duration of each programme varies between three and six months, and upon completion of a module, a student may leave to secure a job in the industry or continue with other modules to gain even more knowledge and skills.

Students are offered the flexibility of taking on more modules at any time in the future, should the need arise, and when time permits. The completion of four to five modules in the related field or subject area entitles the learner to be awarded the Community College Certificate, upon fulfilling a set of compulsory programmes. To date, 114 modules have been developed, and more than 80 have been offered at community colleges. By the end of 2011, the intake for modular programmes in community colleges peaked at 21,833.

Community colleges are still in the early stages of implementing their modular programmes, which has not taken place without major challenges. One such challenge is the operational readiness of colleges in terms of providing new and necessary equipment, and capacity (space, human and financial resources). In relation to human resources' issues, training of trainers takes place in stages, so that lecturers gain the skills and knowledge to teach modular programmes.

The new or upgraded equipment needed to teach such programmes is being identified and a budget has been drawn up to secure the equipment under the Tenth Malaysia Plan; while some issues of limited space in colleges have been resolved by making more intensive use of available space.

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4.35 In-service training for the grandfathering of directors and caregivers of private daycare and pre-school centres, The Bahamas

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Alternative |
| Main issue addressed | Investing in the future through equity in early childhood education |
| Other issues addressed | Indigenous materials and resources Caregiver capacity Private sector partnerships |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Pre-primary students Early childhood directors and caregivers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Provide training for private sector directors and caregivers who are beyond the age of 45, have at least ten years' experience in early childhood care and education (ECCE), and who have no formal training.

(The Bahamas government believes that a focus on equity and quality in pre-school education is crucial, as early education can have a lifelong impact on students, and lead to greater achievement at the secondary level.)

Objectives: (a) to train 100 persons under the grandfather clause before the enactment of a law requiring that all persons involved in ECCE have training;

(b) to build the capacity of caregivers and teachers in private pre-schools to the minimum standard of training;

(c) to increase opportunities in the private sector for children to have greater access to quality pre-school education and care;

(d) to provide greater understanding of the standards required;

(e) to improve the knowledge base of experienced teachers/caregivers; and

(f) to create indigenous materials and resources.

Outputs: (a) increased number of trained caregivers working in daycare and pre-school centres;

(b) improvement in ECCE services;

(c) incentives to pursue higher certification; and

(d) greater acceptance of the monitoring process by education officers.

Outcomes: Improved personal development, (i.e. capacity built in persons who had years of experience, but little technical knowledge), improved adherence to early childhood national standards, and increased access to quality early childhood environments. A longitudinal study is being conducted to assess the impact of the in-service training for the Grandfathering Programme. To date, questionnaires have been completed by the participants, a focus group has been held for caregivers to share the impact of the experience, classroom observations have been conducted and caregivers rated on their performance and environment; and participants have been interviewed.

In-service training for the grandfathering of directors and caregivers of daycare and pre-school centres in the private sector is one of four strategies of the ECCE component of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)-supported project: Investing in Students and Projects for the Innovative Reform of Education, or INSPIRE.

Regulations and standards for daycare and pre-school centres require all persons caring for children under the age of five years to be trained in the area of early childhood

education. The enactment of the Act to Provide for the Regulation and Management of Daycare Centres and Pre-schools was the initiative for the grandfathering programme. Data collected in 2004 revealed that 626 persons/caregivers and pre-school teachers in the private sector were untrained; that is, they did not possess the minimum requirement of an Auxiliary Certificate in Early Childhood Education.

The percentage of qualified pre-school teachers in private schools is indicated below

| Private schools | Provisionally registered | Estimated unregistered |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of institutions | 252 | 85 |
| Number of teachers | 881 | 300 |
| Number of qualified teachers ⁷³ | 494 (56%) | 35 (11%) |

The Ministry of Education provided comprehensive training for directors and caregivers of (mainly) private daycare and pre-school centres. This enabled older caregivers to be upskilled before the new legislation came into effect, under a 'grandfather clause'. The clause was directed at untrained persons already working in the system who had years of experience, but little or no technical training in this field. The training took place from June 2008 to April 2009.

Training modules included components of teaching and learning that addressed the physical environment, child development, administration and management of daycare centres and pre-schools, and curriculum implementation. As a result, 201 candidates received certification from the Ministry of Education which allows them to continue teaching in their various centres.

Implementations and challenges

There are a large number of untrained caregivers (slightly more than 50 per cent) who do not meet the minimum requirements of the legislation. Without formal training, these persons had little understanding of pedagogy, child development and age-appropriate teaching strategies.

Participants in the programme are caregivers who work outside the public school system. As the government is not able to provide realistically for all children at this level within the public school system, building capacity for caregivers in the private sector supports the government's commitment to improve the quality of early childhood education and care for more children.

The grandfathering initiative sought to address several challenges in The Bahamas:

- inadequate human and financial resources allotted to ECCE;
- low emphasis on professional development for persons in the private sector;
- inequity in the pre-school programme;
- limited number of institutions offering ECCE certifications;
- lack of a developmentally appropriate curriculum;
- non-compliance with minimal national standards; and
- the need for greater collaboration among stakeholders.

Having achieved the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary and secondary education, The Bahamas has determined to focus on equity and access to quality pre-school education programmes for all children. The nation believes that quality early education can have a lifelong impact on students and lead to greater achievement at the secondary level.

This initiative enabled teachers and caregivers outside the public school system, and in some remote school districts, to obtain skills and knowledge that would improve and foster

early childhood development. Further, it provided an opportunity to sensitise proprietors, administrators and teachers to the need for proper standards of operation, and to prepare them for the enforcement of these standards in the very near future. These standards focused on the physical environment, staff qualifications, quality early childhood practices, record-keeping in centres and health and safety requirements.

The in-service training conducted by the Ministry of Education through the INSPIRE project comprised 40 hours of early childhood courses which included theories of early childhood development, basic mathematics and English and the National Standards, in addition to supervised teaching practice.

The courses were designed to meet the needs of this specific cohort who would not have been able to qualify themselves through the existing pre-school education programmes offered at tertiary institutions. The in-service training certified caregivers to continue in the field of early childhood, while preparing them to meet the minimum requirements of the legislation.

Officers of the pre-school section of the Ministry of Education will continue monitoring and supervision to ensure that best practices and minimum standards are maintained, and they will conduct ongoing training and professional development throughout the year.

Due to the insufficient number of education officers responsible for early childhood, and the archipelagic nature of The Bahamas, travel to the various islands presented a challenge. Classes were held on weekends on the Family Islands and, as a result, the timeframe for the completion of the course was extended as officers had to travel from New Providence. The challenge was also resolved through the identification of professionals on each of the targeted Family Islands in the teaching and medical fields, and engaging those persons to present some of the courses, especially in areas such as mathematics, English, and child growth and development.

Now that capacity has been built in more persons in the ECCE sector, greater numbers of children and their families have access to an improved quality of early childhood education.

If other countries are considering implementing a similar programme, The Bahamas recommends identifying a team of early childhood specialists to design and implement the programme; securing adequate funding to execute the programme; and designing more age-specific programmes, for example, one for infant and toddler caregivers and another for pre-school caregivers and teachers.

Further information

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4.36 Kenya Education Sector Support Programme 2005–2010, Kenya

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Resources |
| Secondary theme | Devolution |
| Main issue addressed | Delivering quality education and training to all Kenyans |
| Other issues addressed | Enhancing equality, access, relevance and quality |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Tertiary Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents |

Initiative aims

Goal: Enhance access to education.

Objectives: To improve the equality, access, relevance and quality of Kenyan education.

Outputs: Greater participation in management by stakeholders, and development of the skills of teachers and managers.

Outcomes: Improved access and quality, and increased community participation.

Since independence in 1963, the education sector in Kenya has experienced rapid expansion. The number of public and private primary schools increased from 6,058 in 1963 to 27,487 in 2010, while secondary schools increased from 151 to 7,308 over the same period. Enrolment in primary education has grown from 892,000 pupils in 1963 to about 9.4 million pupils in 2010, while enrolment in secondary education has grown from around 30,000 students in 1963 to 1.7 million students in 2010.

The increase has been accelerated by a rapid growth in population, and the introduction of Free Primary Education and Free Day Secondary Education in 2003 and 2008 respectively. At the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) level, enrolments grew to 75,547 in 2010 up from 62,439 in 2003. For the university sub-sector, enrolments rose to 180,617 in 2010 – up from 82,090 in 2003.

Implementation and challenges

In 2012, the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya made a number of recommendations (performance targets) for the Ministry of Education. These targets are listed below:

- (a) Ensure access, equity and quality across all levels of basic education and training by 2020.
- (b) Eliminate gender and regional disparities in basic education and training by 2017.
- (c) Improve the quality of education and training so that Kenya's measurable learning outcomes in literacy, numeracy, scientific and communication skills are in the upper quartile on recognised international standardised tests by 2017.
- (d) Equip schools to ensure that all primary and secondary schools meet minimum quality standards of teaching and learning by 2017.
- (e) In partnership with the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), revise teachers' conditions of service, institute performance contracts for all teachers by 2012, and enforce regulations that require sufficient teachers to be available to cover the syllabus.
- (f) Strengthen school inspection to ensure quality education service delivery at the classroom and school level immediately.

- (g) Develop guidelines for the establishment, registration and operation of early childhood development and education (ECDE) centres, including specifications on physical facilities, equipment, materials, and the qualifications of personnel required to operate them, by 2015.
- (h) Require all primary schools to have a functioning ECDE section, with admission not subjected to entry interviews or examinations, by 2015.
- (i) Create the conditions necessary to ensure that the teaching of science, technology and ICT takes place in all schools by 2022.
- (j) Initiate the implementation of the *new* structure of education (2–6–6–3) by 2013.
- (k) Review the teacher-training curriculum by September 2013.
- (l) Review the basic education curriculum by December 2012.
- (m) In partnership with the TSC, orient teachers on the new curriculum by 2013.
- (n) Strengthen school management through capacity building of boards of management by December 2012. (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

The current focus of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is on the provision of quality education. This is relevant to achieving the economic growth and development needed to face the competition provided by a global market. Non-dependence on external funding and support is another major aim, along with increasing awareness of the importance of lifelong learning.

The ministry has adopted a Sector-Wide Approach to Programme Planning (SWAP): a process of engaging all stakeholders in order to attain national ownership, alignment of objectives, harmonisation of procedures, approaches and a coherent financing arrangement. The SWAP process involves broad stakeholder consultations in designing a coherent and rationalised sector programme at micro-, meso- and macro-levels, and the establishment of strong co-ordination mechanisms among donors, and between donors and the government.

The KESSP initiative adopted this SWAP approach, which now covers a total of 23 investment programmes, and is decentralised to institutional level for implementation, monitoring and reporting. The ministry is responsible for budgeting and the disbursement of education sector funds, as well as for training managers in their use. Quality assurance is conducted at all levels of the system, although ministry personnel have noted that ensuring accountability and implementing effective reporting measures have been challenging.

KESSP is based on the rationale of the nation's overall policy goal of achieving Education for All (EFA), and the government's commitment to the attainment of the (MDGs). The broad objective is to give every Kenyan the right to quality education and training, irrespective of his or her socio-economic status. This will be achieved through the provision of an all-inclusive quality education that is accessible and relevant to all Kenyans.

KESSP co-ordination has been structured in a manner that facilitates: sector-wide stakeholder co-ordination through an education stakeholders forum and a national education advisory council; government co-ordination through inter-ministerial committees on education and training; development partner co-ordination through a consultative Government of Kenya/development partners' committee; ministry-wide co-ordination through a KESSP steering committee; and provincial and district co-ordination through provincial education boards and district education boards (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

The Kenyan ministry advises other countries expanding free public education through programmes similar to KESSP to guard against potential hazards in resource management, and to be sure to implement strategies that will enhance transparency and accountability.

Further information

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4.37 My School website, Australia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Transparency |
| Other issues addressed | School improvement Accountability |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Greater transparency on school performance for the Australian public.

Objectives: (a) to provide information on school performance, finance data and school profile to allow parents to make an informed decision about their child's education;

(b) to allow transparency to ensure resources are targeted to where they are needed most;

(c) to provide clear school performance data that can be used as the basis for targeting funding and resources to schools in need; and

(d) to provide a basis for analysis for policy options, and rational and equitable distribution of national resources.

Outputs: Identified outputs include:

(a) improved transparency;

(b) parent choice; and

(c) community interest in schooling.

Outcomes: A number of key policy reforms can now be informed by My School data including a major current review of Australian government funding and efforts to implement in schools the types of governance arrangements and teaching practices that international analysis such as that from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows make a difference; including school autonomy and school evaluation practices.

The My School website (www.myschool.edu.au) enables users to search the profiles of around 9,500 Australian schools. It contains a range of contextual, capacity and student outcome information, including data such as student numbers, attendance rates, teaching and non-teaching staff numbers, average school performance in national assessments and school financial information.

The website provides an opportunity for everyone to learn more about Australian schools, and for Australian schools to learn more from each other. It contains a set of quality data that teachers, schools, parents and the wider community can use, along with other information, to help ensure that every child in every classroom receives a high-quality education. This is the first time that the broader Australian community has had access to this data.

Implementation and challenges

Prior to the advent of My School, parents had insufficient publicly available data to enable comparison of the operations and achievements of their school with other Australian schools. My School presents comparable school financial, performance and contextual

information that can be searched by school location, sector or name. The website provides statistical and contextual information about each school, as well as results from the National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)⁷⁴ that can be compared with results for all Australian students as well as schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds across Australia.

My School is managed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)⁷⁵ on behalf of all Australian state and territory governments. ACARA is the statutory authority responsible for collecting and reporting data on Australian schools, administering national assessments in literacy and numeracy and developing a national curriculum.

The website uses an index of student and school characteristics, known as the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), to identify schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds. This value represents the average educational advantage level of students at the school. ICSEA enables student results on national tests to be understood and compared in a fair and meaningful way, and enables schools seeking to improve their performance to learn from other schools with statistically similar populations.

In addition to the needs of parents, My School provides clear school performance data that can be used as the basis for targeting funding and resources to schools in need. Before My School was established, there was no nationally-comparable data or single source of data on all schools to provide a basis for analysis for policy options and rational and equitable distribution of national resources.

My School presents school data in a way that places each school at the centre of the reports and is designed to avoid the misinterpretation that often arises with school 'league tables'. Each school report on My School contains national data in three key areas: school operating context; school performance; and school resources.

The development, maintenance and implementation of the My School website were, and are, the responsibility of the ACARA. The cost of funding ACARA is shared equally between the Australian government and the states and territories.

Because each state and territory is responsible for delivering schooling to its own residents in Australia, schooling systems collect data in different ways. As such it was important to make sure that the data was comparable for presentation on the website.

Key factors were critical in achieving national school reporting through My School. These included the following:

- Ministerial leadership and negotiation across federal-state lines was pivotal in gaining agreement from all states and territories to this Australian government initiative.
- A clear rationale for making nationally comparable school information publicly available had to be provided.
- Widespread consultation with educational stakeholders with expertise in schooling and school performance outside of ministers' departments took place.
- National and international school reporting models were reviewed, to identify a set of key development principles tailored to Australia's education system.
- Policy details were based on scientific evidence provided by independent experts.
- Public concern about the production of 'league tables' needed to be overcome, as did concerns about Australia inappropriately following in the footsteps of international practices.

Further information

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4.38 MyUniversity website, Australia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Transparency |
| Other issues addressed | Student-centred approach |
| Level of initiative | Secondary Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Secondary students Post-secondary students Parents Career advisors Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Inform potential higher education students about Australian universities and higher education courses, and showcase the quality of Australia's higher education providers.

Objectives: The MyUniversity website will support the objectives of the Australian government's phased, ten-year reform agenda for higher education, which emphasises the importance of:

- (a) putting students at the centre of government reforms;
- (b) creating a funding framework that supports student choice;
- (c) providing clear information and access to learning about what and where to study; and
- (d) funding that meets student demand coupled with ambitious targets, rigorous quality assurance and full transparency.

Outputs: Since the launch of the website in early April 2012, there have been more than 650,000 page-views across the site.

The MyUniversity website (myuniversity.gov.au) enables students to search and compare Australian universities and higher education courses. It contains course information, student services, campus facilities, applications and offers, results of student satisfaction surveys, results of graduate destination surveys, information about fees, student numbers, student/staff ratios and research student numbers and scholarships.

The website went live in April 2012 and it is the first time potential higher education students have had access to such information in a centrally accessible format that allows comparisons between Australian institutions.

Prior to the development of MyUniversity, students could not locate detailed data about student demographics, results of graduate destination surveys, results of student satisfaction surveys and available courses and fees, within one website, to make comparisons.

Implementation and challenges

The development, maintenance and implementation of the MyUniversity website is a shared responsibility between the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science, Research and Tertiary Education and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations .

Instead of working through individual university websites and thousands of available courses, students and prospective students can use MyUniversity to find information about:

- course information;
- student/staff ratios;

- student numbers;
- applications and offers;
- results of student satisfaction surveys;
- results of graduate destination surveys;
- information about fees;
- information about student services and campus facilities, submitted by universities; and
- research student numbers and scholarships.

Due to the broad range of data collected by the department, in planning the website, it was important to ensure the data was displayed in a format that is beneficial to potential higher education students. A number of key factors were critical in implementing the initiative. These included consulting with the higher education sector and key stakeholders to address key concerns prior to the website release; and overcoming potential public and sector concern about the production of 'league tables'. However, these issues were resolved by emphasising the purpose of the website as a student focused resource.

Further information

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4.39 National Assessment Programme, Australia

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Assessment and accountability |
| Other issues addressed | School improvement Transparency Equity in education |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Identify whether all students have the literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge that provide the critical foundation for other learning and for their productive and rewarding participation in the workforce and broader community.

- Objectives:**
- (a) To allow nationally comparable reporting on the progress of students in priority areas of schooling, using agreed key performance measures. The results are not used towards students' grades or entry into programmes/ courses, but provide valuable information used for policy analysis and setting policy direction.
 - (b) To provide the means by which the achievement and progress of Australian students, schools and systems can be measured and reported on using nationally comparable data against national standards.
 - (c) To support the national measurement framework for national key performance measures, (which collects data that is able to be disaggregated at all levels to provide important information for analysis and evaluation).

Outputs: National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data provides rich information on student, school and system outcomes, which helps identify students at risk and schools that need assistance. Further:

- (a) Student reports are provided to parents in the year in which their child sits the tests. These reports provide parents with an objective account of their child's literacy and numeracy skills and how they compare with the national average, and thus are a basis for conversations between parents and their child's teacher about their child's progress.
- (b) Jurisdictions also provide schools with a detailed report on their students' NAPLAN results. Principals and teachers can use this information to monitor student progress and identify students in need of additional support. The information can assist in their planning to cater for the individual needs of each student, and complements what teachers already know through classroom-based assessments.
- (c) Reports provide information at the national, state and territory level and include information on NAPLAN results broken down by student background characteristics (e.g., sex, indigenous status, language background other than English (status, geo-location, indigenous status by geo-location and parental education and parental occupation); gains in student achievement by the same cohort of students; and participation rates. Information from NAPLAN reports can be used to target support

to where it is most needed, ensuring that the most disadvantaged students receive the support they need to progress.

- (d) The My School (public) website includes information on NAPLAN outcomes at the school level, thus promoting transparency.

- Outcomes:
- (a) The community has comprehensive, national data on performance of students in literacy and numeracy and the key priority areas.
 - (b) Detailed school reports enable better decisions to be made by teachers about student needs.
 - (c) Results from the NAPLAN tests support school transparency by providing valuable information on how students, schools and school systems are performing against national standards, including national minimum standards in each of the assessed areas.
 - (d) Standardised reporting of NAPLAN test results offers an objective view of students' performance and a sound basis for decision-making about literacy and numeracy policies, practices and resourcing. It also allows the Australian public to develop a national perspective on student achievement and the performance of schools.

The National Assessment Programme (NAP) is the measure by which Australian governments, education authorities and schools can determine whether or not students are meeting important educational outcomes.⁷⁶ The National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9; and tests the types of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life – in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy. The assessments are undertaken nationwide, every year, in the second full week of May.

The introduction of NAPLAN in 2008 replaced eight separate state and territory assessments, which were previously used and equated to provide national literacy and numeracy assessment information. The main challenges at that time were in achieving the agreement of all governments to a common national literacy and numeracy assessment and in developing assessments that reflect core elements of the curriculum in all states and territories.

The NAP provides a national collaborative approach to gathering evidence to lift student attainment for all students, especially underperforming students. Student performance varies by student background characteristics and reporting the NAP outcomes by student subgroup (sex, indigenous status, language background other than English, geographic location and parental education and parental occupation, provides nationally comparable information on educational disadvantage.

National reporting of NAP outcomes provides the community with information on how well Australian education is performing in providing its students with foundational skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as in the important areas of science, civics and citizenship and ICT literacy. Results from NAP assessments permit the monitoring of student achievement in a range of skills, over time.

Rich diagnostic information from NAPLAN assessments informs specific intervention strategies and classroom practices to provide targeted support for underperforming students and to address disadvantage in educational opportunity. The data are also used to highlight areas of relative deficiency, determine patterns of educational disadvantage and to improve students' skills and knowledge in important priority areas.

Implementation and challenges

The National Education Agreement (NEA), through which the Australian government provides funding to the states and territories to support improved service and delivery and reforms in Australian schools, was the driving force to gain initial state and territory support to participate in NAP assessments.

The programme is run at the overall direction of the (national) Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)⁷⁷ is the independent statutory authority responsible for programme management, in collaboration with representatives from all states and territories and non-government school sectors.

ACARA is also responsible for the delivery of the NAP sample assessments. Funding of the national aspects of the NAP (test development and the analysis of results) is provided to ACARA by the Australian government, and states and territories, while individual states and territories meet test delivery costs.

State and territory test administration authorities are responsible for the implementation and administration of the NAPLAN tests in their jurisdiction, in accordance with nationally agreed protocols which provide detailed information, such as security requirements and uniform processes and procedures to ensure students complete the tests under similar conditions.

Parents of students taking the tests receive an individual report on their child's results, which provides an objective account of their child's literacy and numeracy skills and how they compare with the national average, and presents a basis for a conversation between parents and their child's teacher about their child's progress.

Student achievement in NAP sample assessments is reported at the national, state and territory level and by selected student background characteristics: sex; indigenous status, parental education and occupation, language background and geographic location. Each NAP sample population assessment measures students' performance based on a performance scale which has proficiency levels established at equally spaced intervals. The proficient standard represents a 'challenging but reasonable' expectation of student achievement.

There are challenges in developing the tests, in ensuring that they reflect what is taught in all state and territory jurisdictions. As the Australian Curriculum is currently being developed by ACARA and is currently being implemented in all states and territories, the NAP assessments will be reviewed continuously to ensure that they reflect the Australian Curriculum.

Further information

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4.40 National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality, Australia

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Teacher quality |
| Other issues addressed | Improving educational attainment |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members |

Initiative aims

Goal: The Smarter Schools – Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership (TQNP) is designed to improve teacher and school leader quality to sustain a quality teaching workforce. Successful implementation of this agreement will be critical to the achievement of the aspirations, objectives and outcomes set out in the National Education Agreement.

Objectives: This national partnership⁷⁸ will contribute to the following outcomes:

- (a) attracting the best entrants to teaching, including mid-career entrants;
- (b) more effectively training principals, teachers and school leaders for their roles and the school environment;
- (c) placing teachers and principals to minimise skill shortages and enhance retention;
- (d) developing teachers and school leaders to enhance their skills and knowledge throughout their careers;
- (e) retaining and rewarding quality principals, teachers and school leaders; and
- (f) improving the quality and availability of teacher workforce data.

Outputs: Full implementation of reforms under the TQNP is expected from 2013. Jurisdictions have already commenced activities agreed under the TQNP and have provided the Australian government with progress reports.⁷⁹

Outcomes: When fully implemented state and territory governments will be able to monitor over time the impact of reforms through established mechanisms of monitoring and reporting. Monitoring of reforms will enable appropriate adjustment or updating of reforms such as the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

Australia is experiencing teacher and school leader shortages (with the exception of non-specialist primary school teachers). In particular, employers report difficulties in attracting and retaining quality teachers in ‘hard-to-staff’ schools and in filling specialist teaching positions, especially in science and mathematics. The teaching workforce is also ageing (nearly one-third of teachers and more than half of school leaders are older than 50) and attrition rates are high, particularly among early career teachers.

At a time of strong labour market competition for high-calibre employees, the ability to attract quality entrants to teaching depends on the profession's attractiveness in comparison to other occupations. Remuneration and employment conditions have been identified as significant factors in people not choosing teaching as a career and in deciding to leave the profession.

Current teacher salaries in Australia plateau quickly, with a less than competitive salary level at the top of the scale, and progression generally based on time served rather than merit. Concerns have also been raised about the lack of consistency in both the quality of Australia's pre-service teacher education system and in the quality and provision of ongoing professional development for teachers and school leaders.

Implementation and challenges

The Australian government has committed 550 million Australian dollars (A\$) to the TQNP in recognition that teacher quality is the single greatest in-school influence on student engagement and achievement; and that improving teacher quality requires both strong school leadership from principals, and new approaches to teacher recruitment, retention and reward.

Under the TQNP, Australian governments are implementing a range of nationally significant and sustainable reforms targeting critical points in the teacher 'lifecycle' to attract, train, place, develop and retain quality teachers and leaders in schools and classrooms. These measures are supported by other reforms including those that will develop effective workforce planning and support and improve teacher remuneration structures, increase school-based decision-making and improve teacher education and professional development. The TQNP provides a platform to raise student performance and to support other school reforms targeting low socio-economic status school communities and literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Reforms under the partnership include National Professional Standards for Teachers, National Professional Standard for Principals, and accreditation of initial teacher education programmes, nationally consistent teacher registration and certification of highly accomplished and lead teachers.

The Australian government established and funded the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in 2010 to lead these reforms. AITSL is working in collaboration with state and territory governments, education jurisdictions, regulatory authorities, teacher and parent groups and other key stakeholders to develop and implement these reforms.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers are a key element of the TQNP. The standards are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality, and set out what teachers should know and be able to do at different stages across their careers. The standards also underpin teacher and school leader future professional development as well as guide the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes, initial teacher registration, performance appraisal and professional progression.

The National Professional Standard for Principals sets out what principals are expected to know, understand and do to achieve in their work. AITSL managed the development of the standard through a series of pilot studies and rigorous testing with principals and other stakeholders.

Nationally consistent accreditation of initial teacher education programmes – where all courses will be assessed against national programme standards – and nationally consistent registration of teachers will contribute to improving and maintaining the quality of the teaching workforce.

The TQNP commits all Australian state and territory governments to national consistency in certification of highly accomplished and lead teachers. Voluntary certification is intended to address the challenge of recruiting, developing and retaining high-quality teachers by enabling teachers at the higher career stage to progress their career while remaining in the classroom. AITSL is currently consulting nationally on a draft certification proposal prior to implementation by jurisdiction from 2013.

AITSL is also leading the development of initiatives to support professional development for teachers and school leaders. AITSL's work on professional development also includes support for the development of a professional learning module to help leaders working with

indigenous students, commission of the Leading Curriculum Change flagship programme, and the development of a clearinghouse (containing research and resources) to support principals.

While all state and territory governments agreed to implement a range of reforms under the TQNP, agreement on the structure, content and application of the reforms had to be obtained from jurisdictions. Many jurisdictions already had systems in place, such as teaching standards, teacher registration/certification processes and mechanisms for programme accreditation, which required extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders to develop an acceptable national proposal. Some jurisdictions will need to change state legislation in order to fully implement some reforms (registration).

Endorsement from all education ministers was required prior to the finalisation and implementation of each reform. AITSL consulted widely with key stakeholders, many of whom were also included on the working groups or committees, during the development and implementation of each reform.

Further information

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4.41 National policy and strategy for the attainment of core competences in primary education, Malta

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Curriculum development |
| Other issues addressed | School improvement |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: Children acquire the core competences necessary for them to access the curriculum effectively, so they can embark successfully on their lifelong learning journey to the best of their abilities.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date include:

- (a) more ownership by schools and class teachers with regard to effective teaching and learning;
- (b) clearer identification of learners who need support in mastering their core competences; and
- (c) greater collaboration between stakeholders, especially class teachers, complementary educators and literacy support teachers – as well as with other stakeholders providing services both during and after school hours.

Outcomes: Schools have a clearer strategy in deciding what they need to focus on to achieve mastery of core competences; how to achieve those targets; and who is to be involved in the implementation of the process. They have begun to reflect on how they can provide different learning experiences to prevent attainment deficits in a student's acquisition of core competences. This more thorough approach is also mirrored in college-based action plans, which are currently being drafted. (An evaluation of the performance of these action plans is currently underway.)

In January 2009, the Core Competences Working Group published a national policy and an implementation strategy for the policy, regarding the acquisition of core competences. The core competences cover three main areas: literacy, mathematics and e-literacy (digital literacy). The aim of the policy and the strategy is to ensure that all Maltese children acquire the competences not later than Year 3 of primary education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2009).

Among other resources, checklists have been proposed for each of the three competences at Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels. These checklists help educators identify children at risk at an early stage. Consequently, educators will be in a position to provide appropriate support for as long as it is needed. This will enable children to access the full curriculum and become successful, lifelong learners.

The national policy and the strategy emphasise the need for all stakeholders to co-operate and co-ordinate their work for the benefit of the child; stakeholders include teachers, schools and other educational leaders, parents and the community at large. This initiative is one of a number of measures taken to improve the quality of Malta's educational services. It is expected to enhance student achievement and raise the national standard.

Malta is working towards drastically reducing its early school leavers' rate to the established benchmarks of the European Union – which stand at 10 per cent – by 2020. Initiatives are constantly being implemented to attract more young learners to lifelong learning

through the introduction of vocational subjects in secondary education, new schools, and technologies in the classrooms such as interactive whiteboards, computers, and e-content, individual learning assistance at an early age, the provision of vocational programmes at the first three levels of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF), and work-based learning approaches through joint public–private initiatives.

In 2012, parliament will be amending the Education Act to legalise the framework of qualifications and the validation of informal and non-formal learning, and to set up a more robust approach to the quality assurance, accreditation and licensing of all programmes and institutions in further and higher education.

The national policy and accompanying strategy for the attainment of core competences in primary education addresses not only educational engagement and success, but also fosters schools' capacities to address these issues effectively and proactively, thus placing the policy's implementation within the context of the overall approach to school empowerment and improvement.

The national policy is also part of the wider national commitment towards an orientation to lifelong learning. In this aspect, the policy considers the role of the different stakeholders in relation to the cycle of compulsory educational experiences in Malta and the nation's commitment to ensuring learners can master the required core competences. Accordingly, the policy establishes criteria relating to the roles of:

- school stakeholders;
- entities servicing schools;
- day school provision;
- after-school and family based provision; and
- monitoring and reviewing of strategy.

The document establishes the baseline definitions of literacy, e-literacy and numeracy, and proposes core competences checklists for Maltese and English literacy, e-literacy and numeracy for Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels. Teachers use these checklists to identify learners who have not achieved the core competence benchmark, and who therefore require special assistance.

A major development to enhance core competences in compulsory education and ensure wider recognition of skills and competences was the development of a MQF for lifelong learning in 2007 which, two years later (2009), was referenced to the European Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

The Referencing Report (Malta Qualifications Council, 2010) details how national qualifications in Malta are aligned to an eight-tier framework which cuts across the whole system of education. The framework covers sectors from compulsory education to adult learning, including vocational and higher education, as well as all forms of informal and non-formal learning.

Implementation and challenges

The strategy is being implemented through a defined set of cycles and phases, and looks strategically at ways of encouraging and promoting the dynamic balance between central structures, colleges and individual schools.

Responsibility for achieving targets rests with individual schools under the guidance of each college principal. At the central level, a directorate for quality and standards in education ensures that the targets set by the schools align with national priorities; monitors implementation; and provides services and resources to assist the schools to achieve such standards and results. (At this stage of the core competences programme, the major focus is on the Maltese and English literacy components of the policy.)

The core competences literacy checklists have been piloted and adopted by all state schools. Class teachers have been trained in their use and, at the central level, literacy

support teachers are available to assist the schools with the implementation of the checklists, while class teachers have had extensive training opportunities in the best use of the checklists, and parents have also been offered information sessions.

By 2011, all schools had to present a statutory action plan (SAP) for those learners in Year 3 who had not yet mastered the literacy core competences. These SAPs included the targets set (based on the needs of the learners in each school), expected outcomes and performance indicators. Through these SAPs, the schools defined an integrated and comprehensive set of practical actions to address their own specific targets, which incorporated school-led assessment and evaluation procedures. The action plans were then implemented when the identified learners were in their next year of schooling: Year 4.

A major challenge faced by Malta in implementing this initiative was rationalising different service providers that were not working coherently. A further challenge involved moving from an 'additive' and 'remedial' approach to addressing core competences in learning, to an integrative and holistic approach based on early support and identification, which also includes access to remedial support.

However, the most significant challenge faced was to address the profound culture change required for teachers to 'own' the individual learning needs of all their students, and moving from a focus on delivery to a focus on the active learning of every child. This was achieved through a combination of: strong central direction; up-skilling schools and their management; ongoing teacher training; resource development; in-class support; heightened expectations; and making data available to assist schools in their school development planning.

To achieve success, educational authorities are instilling a strong sense of ownership of the policy by all stakeholders. Awareness raising and opportunities for training and support are essential at every stage to ensure that there is smooth transition from one phase to another.

Further information

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4.42 National School Nutrition Programme, South Africa

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Primary theme | Equity |
| Secondary theme | Devolution |
| Main issue addressed | Quality basic education |
| Other issues addressed | Learner well-being |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |
| | Community members |

Initiative aims

Goal: Enhance learning capacity and improve access to education.

- Objectives:**
- (a) to contribute to teaching and learning by working with provinces and districts in providing nutritious meals;
 - (b) to promote sustainable food production initiatives in schools, in order to develop skills and knowledge;
 - (c) to strengthen nutrition education for school communities, to promote healthy life styles; and
 - (d) To develop and strengthen partnerships to support the programme.

Outputs: Monitoring reports and anecdotal information from school principals, educators and parents have indicated that the programme has made a difference through improved school attendance and enrolment, as well as increased attention span of learners in the classrooms. In the 2011–12 financial year, the programme reached a total of 8,838,987 learners in 21,249 public primary and secondary schools.

Outcomes: No evaluation studies have been conducted to date.

The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) is a South African government initiative, introduced in 1994, for poverty alleviation, and specifically intended to uphold the rights of children to basic food, and to contribute to learning by providing good, nutritious meals. Since its inception, the NSNP has targeted learners from the poorest communities.

A significant proportion of people in South Africa still live in poverty. Estimates by the Human Sciences Research Council show that approximately 57 per cent of individuals in South Africa were living below the poverty income line in 2001, unchanged from 1996 (Schwabe, 2004). An additional challenge is the poor nutritional status of children, with the joint problems of malnutrition (underweight, stunted stature, overweight) as well as micro-nutrient deficiency.

Learner well-being is an important element in achieving the goals of the Department of Basic Education's Action Plan 2014, which seeks to provide quality education for all. The school nutrition programme protects children at risk against hunger, and therefore keeps them alert and actively engaged in activities in school – as well as increasing school attendance.

The impact of poor nutrition and health on quality teaching and learning is acknowledged globally, and so the NSNP continues to benefit the neediest learners in developing their cognitive abilities.

Implementation and challenges

The programme started in primary schools, and has been progressively expanded to cover the poorest 60 per cent of primary and secondary schools. It is funded by the state through a conditional grant from the National Treasury.

The minimum requirements of the NSNP are:

- school feeding of all learners in Quintile 1, 2 and 3 (poorest) primary and secondary schools, on all school days;
- meals must adhere to specified menus using dietary guidelines, and consist of starch, protein, and fruit or vegetable group foods daily; and
- meals are served at 10am daily, or later if a breakfast is also provided.

As noted above, during the 2011–12 financial year, the programme reached a total of 8,838,987 learners in 21,249 public primary and secondary schools. More than 47,000 volunteer food handlers cooked and served meals to learners, for which they received a modest stipend. In addition, around 3,600 small to medium enterprises (including local women's co-operatives) procure meals and deliver them to schools nationwide.

Nutrition education, a key pillar of the programme, is aimed at promoting healthy eating habits among learners and school communities through the school curriculum, media campaigns and the distribution of resource material, including charts, pamphlets and posters, to deliver key messages on good nutrition.

Another important pillar is a sustainable food production in schools initiative, which encourages schools to develop school food gardens and to promote gardening knowledge and skills. The produce from school gardens is used to supplement school meals, or when plentiful, to sell for additional school income.

The DBE is responsible for NSNP policy directions and for overseeing the overall management of the programme. Provincial education departments have responsibility for implementing the programme at the district and school levels; for developing and managing a monitoring and evaluation plan; and for reporting on the programme.

Major challenges faced by the department in implementing this innovative programme have included:

- (a) *Lack of preparation and cooking facilities (at schools) that meet health and safety standards:* The department continues to strengthen partnerships with the business sector to gain support in building and donating fully-equipped container kitchens, while improved health and hygiene practices are encouraged through training workshops.
- (b) *Inadequate human resources available to monitor the programme at the district level:* This has been a major challenge, which is continuously negotiated with the South African National Treasury and provincial departments, through attempting to appoint full-time NSNP co-ordinators. Community and civil society organisation are also engaged in providing feedback on school-level practices.
- (c) *Inadequate cooking and eating utensils and equipment:* In the last three years, the DBE has progressively allocated funds to procure equipment and utensils for targeted schools, while programme guidelines for equipment have been developed.
- (d) *Poor quality food delivered to schools:* The DBE, in collaboration with the Department of Health, develops food specification guidelines, and monitors these through random sampling of products delivered to schools.

South Africa recommends that other countries considering a similar programme should conduct a situational analysis to collect baseline information that can inform interventions and improve planning for programme implementation.

Potential improvements to the NSNP being considered by DBE include: reviewing the meal cost, which could include provision of breakfast, as the majority of learners come to school hungry (a second meal could have been provided to sustain learners without compromising nutrient value); and the potential for decentralisation of funds to schools to allow them to have more responsibility and accountability.

Further information

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4.43 New academies, free schools and university technical colleges, United Kingdom

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| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | School improvement |
| Other issues addressed | Increased choices |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Community members Parents Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Establish new academies, free schools and university technical colleges with greater freedom to raise attainment, thus providing parents with more choice.

Outputs: (a) increased standards across the whole education system by allowing academies' head teachers, teachers and governors to make more of the decisions, rather than the local authority or politicians; and
(b) greater freedom for academies to teach, spend money and run activities in ways that specifically suit their local community of pupils, their parents, and those working in partnership with the school.

Outcomes: (a) improvement in raising reading standards and working collectively; and
(b) the number of schools opting for academy status is increasing.

The vision of the United Kingdom's (UK) ministries responsible for education is for a highly-educated society in which opportunity is more equal for children and young people, no matter what their background or family circumstances. This is to be achieved by five medium-term objectives:

- raising standards of educational achievement;
- closing the achievement gap between rich and poor;
- reforming the schools system;
- supporting all children and young people, particularly the disadvantaged; and
- improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the respective national departments for education.

Research from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and others has shown that more autonomy for individual schools helps raise standards. In its most recent international survey of education, the OECD found that 'in countries where schools have greater autonomy over what is taught and how students are assessed, students tend to perform better' (OECD, 2011).

The UK government believes that teachers and head teachers should control schools and have more power over how they are run. Academies are publicly funded independent schools that, for example, can establish their own pay and conditions for staff; have freedom in relation to the delivery of the curriculum; and can change the length of their terms and school days.

Using the freedoms available to them, academies are able to innovate across all aspects of their work, such as curriculum, discipline, pastoral care, staff development and assessment,

to personalise the support they provide and improve standards for all pupils in the communities they serve. Families of academies can ensure that these benefits are provided more quickly to greater numbers of pupils.

Implementation and challenges

(a) Academies

It has always been the responsibility of schools to identify their academically more able pupils. School leaders in the United Kingdom have been given the freedom and flexibility to offer tailored learning opportunities, so that the most academically able pupils receive appropriate challenge and stretch. A planned pupil premium will provide additional funding to schools to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able. At the end of Key Stage 2, schools now can use Level 6 tests to allow brighter primary pupils to demonstrate knowledge and skills from a higher key stage.

The Department for Education (England) has introduced measures so that schools are more accountable to parents to help ensure that all pupils make progress; for example publishing clearer performance tables. For the first time this year, 2011 performance tables include information on progression of groups of pupils with different levels of attainment – so parents and others can see how well children of different abilities are catered for.

(b) Families in the foundation years

Improving the support that children receive in their early years is central to the UK government's aims of greater social mobility and reducing the number of children in poverty. The government intends putting in place a coherent framework of services for families, from pregnancy through to age five, which focus on promoting children's development and helping with all aspects of family life. To date, this has resulted in an increase in free early education for all three and four year-olds to 15 hours per week since September 2010, to make sure children are well prepared for school. The government also plans to:

- offer two year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds a free entitlement to 15 hours' early education by 2013;
- slim down the framework for early years settings (the early years' foundation stage), with a stronger focus on the three prime areas which are most essential for children's learning and development, and on sharing information with parents;
- recruit 4,200 more health visitors over the next four years, so that all families can benefit from regular support from a health visitor and receive the Healthy Child Programme;
- double the number of teenage mothers and their children who can benefit from the Family Nurse Partnership;
- introduce a new system of flexible parental leave from 2015 to help parents balance their work and family commitments; and
- retain a network of Sure Start children's centres, open to all families but focused on those in greatest need.

Further information

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4.44 Non-formal education resource centre, Sri Lanka

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| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Uplifting life through skills' development |
| Other issues addressed | Assisting non-privileged youth develop their skills |
| Level of initiative | Marginalised youth |
| Target beneficiaries | School leavers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Social and economic development of Sri Lankan youth.

Objectives: To provide the opportunity for young people to gain the vocational training and language skills of their choice, as without proper guidance, their lives can be easily subject to unrest.

Outputs: An average of 750 individuals participate annually in the courses offered, and the numbers of interested applicants are constantly growing. During feedback sessions, it was noted that all participants of courses such as information technology have secured jobs through the vocational training provided. Also, those who participated in short courses have been able to initiate self-employment using the skills training they have received.

Outcomes: The initiative has gained a good reputation and the trust of school leavers and parents. The increased number of applications for the courses being offered illustrates this, and is supported by the personal reflections and comments of those who have already benefitted by participating in programmes.

In Sri Lanka, the net enrolment ratio in education was 97 per cent in 2002 (MDG Sri Lanka, 2012). At the end of their secondary education, 40 per cent of school students leave formal education without a well-recognised certificate. Similarly, 97 per cent of participants of General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-Level are not given opportunities to enter university.

Furthermore, unemployment is a major regional and national problem: often jobs are not available for young people, while also there are limited numbers of qualified young people with the skills required for existing job opportunities. The programme attempts to address this challenge by making qualified young people available for existing job opportunities.

Implementation and challenges

This initiative helps to fill gaps in the broader formal education system in the context of life skills. The educational resource centre provides non-formal education services as well as mainstream educational opportunities, depending on current national vocational requirements. Annually, the centre conducts approximately 15 vocational training courses of eight months' duration, and approximately 12 short-term vocational courses. The facility also features a reading centre.

On average, 750 individuals benefit annually from courses including: information technology, graphic design, computer hardware, electronics, draftsperson training (AutoCAD), sewing, machine embroidery, typing and languages (Sinhala, Tamil, English, German) – each of which are of eight months' duration.

Cookery, photography, cake making, hairdressing, curtaining, sari designing, batik work, lace work, and wool knitting are examples of short-term courses. These courses are directly aimed at helping young people focus on job opportunities.

The non-formal education resource centre is managed at the regional level. There is no specific budget allocated for different components, but the main operational funding occurs through the provincial education department and the relevant Sri Lankan government

line ministry. The departmental officers responsible for non-formal education (regional and national) undertake quality assurance of the institute's proceedings.

At the beginning of the initiative, the attitudes of parents and school leavers were a major challenge. Often they shared a misconception that community education programmes did not provide young people with recognised qualifications for job opportunities. This challenge was overcome by continuous awareness sessions, and gradually the benefits of the programmes offered were recognised.

Should other countries consider a similar initiative, Sri Lankan educators advise that the programmes offered should be constantly streamlined to match the demands of society, therefore allowing participants to directly take practical benefit from them. Further, it would be advantageous to begin offering the courses with more resources initially, thus improving learning support and outcomes.

The **Commonwealth of Learning (COL)** has been involved in education and development in Sri Lanka through several initiatives in three sectors: education, learning for livelihoods and human environment. This has involved education sector development, quality assurance, teacher training and development, capacity building in open and distance learning (ODL) and testing new models of community engagement with the media. ODL activities have included a dual-model system at the higher education sector and working with non-government organisations (NGOs) as well as community-based organisations (CBOs), among them, the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), the University of Colombo, National Institute of Education (University of Ruhuna) and a number of NGOs. The COL also supported counterpart universities and agencies in professional development across different disciplines, to explore and share local, regional and international experience, especially in line with the ODL programmes. COL also provided assistance to the Open University of Sri Lanka to transform and implement their existing diploma/certificate programmes on "good governance and leadership" into ODL format, for delivery through OUSL's regional centres.

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4.45 Open and distance learning at secondary education, teacher education levels, Malawi

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Quality and relevance |
| Other issues addressed | Governance and management |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Community members |

Initiative aims

Goal: Recipients of education benefit socially and economically, with a view to participating successfully in national and international development.

Objective: To provide education through open and distance education (ODL) by MCDE (Malawi College of Distance Education).

Outputs:

- (a) learner enrolment at primary school level has increased (in some schools almost doubling);
- (b) enrolment at secondary school level has increased;
- (c) adults are able to take up secondary school courses and improve their academic qualifications;
- (d) the gap in teacher shortage is narrowing; and
- (e) the quality of instructional courses in open and distance learning is supporting and improving the quality of teaching and learning in conventional schools.

Outcomes: Through observation and informal talks with the public, both young and old people are showing a greater interest in education. An improved desire for education and reading is observable, and existing negative attitudes to open and distance education are being reduced as institutions are now opening themselves to dual-mode systems (e.g. Mzuzu University, Blantyre International University, Domasi College of Education, teacher training colleges in Malawi, Shareworld Open University).

The MCDE, a Ministry of Education, Science and Technology facility, provides primary and secondary school level education. The college supports teachers and learners to achieve quality education through electronic media on national radio – the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation.

The MCDE focuses on secondary and primary courses. However, the Department of Teacher Education and Development, which is also under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, focuses on teacher training. Each institution offering courses through ODL prepares a budget and submits it to the government, and is responsible for the implementation of its programmes.

Nevertheless, at the development level, institutions share expertise to ensure that the quality of distance learning courses is maintained. In addition, each institution monitors its own programmes to make sure they are within the required standards. Outsiders are also allowed to sample the materials and comment, for quality improvement.

Implementation and challenges

Currently, the service targets the junior primary sector and is expected soon to cover senior primary. This initiative has increased school enrolment, attendance and performance

in the sector. The service, which targets the learner, is also enjoyed by everyone in the community and some adults learn from the lessons aired on national radio.

The provision of secondary school education began in 2002. Having changed from distance education centres to community day secondary schools, the College introduced another approach called open secondary schools (OSSs). The MCDE provides the same secondary school subjects as offered in conventional secondary schools, at two levels: junior secondary education and senior secondary education. Learners in this system of study are enrolled under the management and administration of the conventional secondary school to which they are attached.

The college:

- develops and produces modular courses in print form to be used by learners in OSSs;
- trains teacher supervisors at OSSs in the management and administration of open schooling and academic course delivery; and
- assists OSSs with learner-support (academic and administrative).

In OSSs, both males and females are accommodated regardless of age, religion, etc. The college also allows distance learners to access its printed instructional materials. The quality of education for both open schooling and conventional learners has improved.

As noted in outputs above, access to secondary school education has increased from 17,000 learners in 2006 to more than 40,000 learners (2012). Personal initiative of, and motivation by, adults to access education to improve their academic qualification has also improved (assessed by the number of adults who come to the college to purchase instructional materials).

At the primary school level, there has been a huge shortage of teachers. Between 2008 and 2012, the government recruited 10,000 teacher trainees, who are working in primary schools while studying for a qualification through ODL.

In summary, Malawi's open and distance learning initiative is:

- improving the quality of instructional strategies;
- responding favourably to shortages of conventional learning spaces;
- allowing everyone who needs education to access it;
- responding favourably to gender equity and equality (female and male learners are able to access education); and
- increasing the number of teachers, as more teachers are being trained through ODL.

Although the Malawi government is responsible for all the open and distance learning programmes, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) currently supports the primary school radio programmes (until September, 2012).

The open and distance learning programmes appear to be quite cost-effective. In optimising ODL opportunities, the government spends less than it would spend in providing education and training through conventional methods. Facilities and human resources to support ODL are small, yet serve a large number of learners. And although there are huge costs in the development and production of the course materials, this is offset by economies of scale.

The major challenges involved in implementing the initiative have been:

- *Quality of course developers*: Some are not conversant with ODL philosophy and practices. In this case, course developers are given a short course in the philosophy and practice of ODL, including skills in writing.
- *Old press equipment (printing machines)*: Some are obsolete, and the college is expending significant funds to maintain them.
- *Inadequate knowledge and skills* of the ODL system – by implementers.

- *Shortage of staff for various activities:* Necessary tasks include assessment and identification, instructional designing, copyediting, typesetting, training in ODL, evaluation and monitoring, research for development.
- *Inadequate equipment and means of distributing course materials.*

If repeating the initiative Malawi would explore how digital or e-learning would allow many learners to access learning resources, other than through print only; improve short training programmes for teachers in ODL systems and course development; and make course materials modular.

For other countries seeking to implement a similar initiative, Malawi advises educators to share course materials with other ODL institutions, both local and international, to make the overall ODL system more cost effective; and to engage in research to improve ODL course development, besides offering traditional courses.

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4.46 Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme, Canada

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| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | System monitoring and accountability |
| Other issues addressed | Informing Canadians about how their education systems are meeting the needs of students and society |
| Level of initiative | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | School leavers Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** A comparable measure of student achievement in the middle years, across provinces and territories.
- Objectives:** To provide information on the context of learning and teaching through detailed questionnaires administered to students, teachers, and school principals.
- Outputs:** Public, contextual, technical and research reports, as well as assessment frameworks.
- Outcomes:** A shared vision for curriculum, policy, and assessment across the provinces and territories, and an understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with participating in international assessment initiatives. PCAP was implemented about 10 years prior to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Canada, and we believe it has contributed to Canada's strong results in PISA, by promoting a positive culture of assessment in Canadian schools and a shared understanding of high expectations for all students.

The goal of PCAP is to complement other assessments undertaken at the classroom, school, province or territory, and international levels. Since education in Canada is a provincial or territorial responsibility, PCAP offers both a challenge and an opportunity to determine the skills and knowledge that are common to Grade 8 students across the country.

PCAP contributes to the validation of curricula in the provinces and territories. Through contextual questionnaires, PCAP helps stakeholders to understand the links between achievement and students' home and school environments.

PCAP is administered every three years to a sample of approximately 30,000 Grade 8 students from 1,500 schools. Results are reported at the provincial, territorial and national levels only. Detailed contextual reports, as well as specific research reports, are developed to guide provinces and territories as they revise their policies, curricula, and practices.

Implementation and challenges

PCAP is funded by provinces and territories and has been developed by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), with the assistance of content experts and teachers from all Canadian jurisdictions. A rigorous process has been put in place for the development, validation, field testing, and administration of the assessment.

CMEC believes that it is important to commit long-term to the programme, regardless of the results. A significant benefit of assessments such as PCAP is that they allow for the monitoring of trends in achievement over time, if the initiative is maintained as a long-term commitment.

For other countries interested in implementing a similar programme, PCAP personnel advise expanding the assessment to non-core subject areas, at least occasionally, to provide additional information benefits.

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4.47 Primary Education Review and Implementation, Singapore

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Priorities, programmes and resources needed to bring primary education to the next level |
| Other issues addressed | School improvement |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

- Goal:** Provide Singaporean children with a balanced and well-rounded education in their foundation years.
- Objectives:** To consult stakeholders on the philosophy and desired outcomes of holistic education at the primary level; study and recommend strategies to enhance primary education; and in that context consider in detail the following areas:
- (a) the roll-out of single-session primary schools;
 - (b) the move towards an all-graduate teacher recruitment by 2015; and
 - (c) recommendations to rebalance the learning of content knowledge and the development of skills and values so that young Singaporeans are well prepared for the future.
- Outputs:** The initiative is in its first year only at this stage, and outputs are yet to be identified.
- Outcomes:** The Primary Education Review and Implementation (PERI) committee believes that Singapore must equip its children with the necessary skills and dispositions to excel in an increasingly complex environment, and to better prepare them for life beyond the classroom. This provides a strong impetus for the nation to place renewed emphasis on holistic education, including character and life-skills development, starting at the primary level.

Implementation and challenges

In mid-2009, the Government of Singapore accepted the recommendations of the PERI committee. The committee sought to build on Singapore's strong education fundamentals, while raising the quality of teaching and learning, and so made recommendations across two broad areas. These recommendations were:

- (a) 'The (Singapore) education system should balance the acquisition of knowledge with the development of skills and values, through increased use of engaging and effective teaching methods, more holistic assessment, and a stronger emphasis on non-academic aspects within the curriculum.'
- (b) 'More resources [should] be made available in the areas of staffing, funding and infrastructure to support the proposed changes.' (MoE Singapore, 2012b).

Proposed strategies to achieve the committee's recommendations are identified below.

(a) *Balancing knowledge with skills and values*

1. *Use engaging pedagogy to teach skills and values:*

- strengthen training of teachers in content mastery and in using a repertoire of generic and subject specific teaching methods.

2. *Emphasise non-academic programmes within the curriculum:*

- implement a programme for active learning (PAL) for all Primary 1 and 2 pupils in sports and outdoor education and performing and visual arts, in tandem with the move to the single-session model;

- encourage all Primary 3 to 6 pupils to continue with PAL and/or to opt for a main co-curricular activity;
 - give schools autonomy, with guidelines and examples of good practices, in the implementation of PAL, which should complement existing art, music and physical education programmes;
 - enhance the quality of art, music and PE instruction through optimal deployment of qualified teachers;
 - provide schools with funds to engage trained coaches, instructors and service providers approved by the Ministry of Education to conduct quality PAL activities, as well as to procure equipment for art, music, physical education and other PAL activities; and
 - work closely with the Singapore Sports Council, the National Arts Council and other relevant agencies to build the pool of instructors for PAL in the long term.
3. *More holistic assessment to support learning:*
- encourage schools to move away from an overly strong emphasis on examinations in Primary 1 and 2, and explore the use of 'bite-sized' forms of assessment to help build pupils' confidence and desire to learn;
 - place less importance on semester examinations in Primary 1 to ensure pupils' transition from pre-school to primary school. Primary 2 pupils could be slowly eased into taking examinations;
 - equip teachers to use rubrics to assess and provide pupils with richer and more holistic feedback on their development and skills acquisition in academic and non-academic areas;
 - encourage primary schools to provide parents with a more comprehensive holistic development profile which captures a fuller picture of their child's progress and learning throughout the year;
 - continue to provide clear guidelines on the learning outcomes for each subject at the end of every level, to facilitate teachers' design of appropriate assessment tasks and ensure students' continued mastery of foundational skills; and
 - develop a system to assess schools' ability to develop their pupils in academic and non-academic areas and to provide a more holistic education.

(b) *Investing in a quality teaching force*

1. *Provide additional resources:*
- in line with bringing forward the recruitment of teachers and allied educators, recruit and train more art, music and physical education teachers to raise the quality of instruction in these subjects; and
 - engage individuals with strong oral communication skills as language facilitators in schools.
2. *Recruit committed, quality educators:*
- continue to carefully select aspiring educators with the right aptitude, passion and suitability for teaching;
 - focus efforts to recruit new teachers from the pool of university graduates, or those who qualify for an undergraduate education, by 2015, to maintain the calibre of the teaching service;
 - encourage eligible non-graduates to join the teaching service by enrolling in the National Institute of Education's degree programmes, or to work closely with teachers as allied educators (teaching and learning), with future opportunities to become fully-fledged teachers; and

- provide current non-graduate teachers with avenues for professional development and/or academic upgrading.
3. *Equip teachers with the necessary skills through training and professional development:*
- strengthen pre- and in-service training to systematically equip all teachers with the basic teaching skills, sound content mastery and provide a variety of teaching and assessment methods;
 - encourage subject specialisation of teachers at the upper primary levels through in-service training, while continuing to provide schools with the autonomy to deploy their teachers according to their needs; and
 - continue to provide schools and teachers with rich learning resources and packages, and to work closely with schools to help them build expertise in new teaching and assessment methods (MoE Singapore, 2012b).

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4.48 Quality assurance of the Tertiary Education Commission, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Regulatory framework to assure quality of tertiary education provision |
| Other issues addressed | Instilling principles of good governance, transparency and accountability in the post-secondary education sector |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Since 2005, the growth of private post-secondary institutions has been very rapid. The challenge for Mauritius has been to ensure the quality of higher education at a national level; to safeguard the interests of the different stakeholders; and to widen access to tertiary education.

Objectives: To assist in the promotion of Mauritius as a world-class knowledge hub and as a gateway for post-secondary education in the region, and to attract 100,000 foreign students to Mauritius by 2020.

Outputs: All public institutions have completed the first cycle of quality audits and the second cycle is due to start in 2012. A total of 58 private institutions have been registered and their programmes accredited.

Outcomes: Increased public and institutional confidence in the quality of post-secondary education services delivery in Mauritius

Publicly funded tertiary education institutions are required to undergo an external verification of their quality assurance system, commonly called a quality audit, every five years. The first cycle of the quality audit, which started in 2005, has been completed and a new set of criteria for the second cycle has already been published.

The quality audit is conducted by an approved audit panel comprising international and local experts in the field of quality assurance. All tertiary education institutions have been empowered in establishing their internal quality assurance systems, and in preparing for the quality audit, by means of regular sensitisation workshops. After each institutional quality audit, implementation of the audit panel recommendations is closely monitored.

All private, post-secondary education providers are required to have their institution registered and their programmes accredited with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The programmatic accreditation is concerned with the quality of a programme or course that is intended to be offered by the private institution.

For the purpose of accreditation, a panel, comprising co-opted members from the industry sector and subject specialists in academia, is constituted. Medical and allied programmes are scrutinised by international monitoring committees, comprising international experts from overseas at the level of university faculty dean, the relevant councils, and representatives of the TEC and other related ministries.

Implementation and challenges

The TEC is responsible for the implementation of the regulatory framework governing quality assurance, recognition and equivalence, in higher education in Mauritius. No fees are charged for the quality audits of public institutions; however, private institutions are required to pay for registering their institutions and to accredit their programmes.

Building such a regulatory framework has been a complex exercise, which needs to be adapted to the local context. To command respect, all regulations and guidelines need to be clearly stipulated; and all procedures need to be transparent. A participatory approach is required in order to 'win over' the collaboration of institutions in the process.

Further information

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4.49 Quality education, improved access, and inclusive education initiative, Cameroon

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Improve quality, governance and sustainability |
| Other issues addressed | Revised teaching approaches and assessment methods |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Pupils of nursery and primary schools |

Initiative aims

Goal: Improve access, quality, governance and sustainability in the Cameroon education system.

Objectives: The initiatives aim to strengthen the Cameroon education system as it moves towards the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of 2015 on Education (Universal Primary Education for all) and the Cameroon 2035 vision.

Outputs: Improved school enrolment, especially for girls.

Outcomes: Improved community support for girls' education.

The Cameroon government's initiatives have been planned to improve access, quality, governance and sustainability, and involve a wide range of individual programmes. These include:

- revised teaching approaches based on the development of competencies in learners;
- revised assessment methods of pupils based on learner achievements;
- promotion of bilingualism (English and French);
- introduction of ICT in the school curriculum and the creation of ICT pilot schools;
- the use of national languages as a medium of learning in some pilot schools;
- 'education priority areas' created in parts of the country which have low school enrolment because of cultural and geographical factors;
- child-friendly and girl-friendly schools created in education priority areas;
- inclusive education initiative (which is still at the policy level); and
- combatting corruption in schools.

Implementation and changes

The Ministry of Education in Cameroon defines the nation's education policy and implements it with the help of school authorities at the regional and district levels. There is also institutional strengthening and support from technical and financial partners.

The challenges are many. Poor literacy and numeracy skills continue to be problematic. There is a high school dropout rate. Low enrolment of girls needs to be addressed, along with low teacher supply, a problem which is related to poor working conditions for teachers.

Low financial allocations for education initiatives hinder attempts to progress, and cultural practices need to be resolved successfully. Fortunately, however, the initiatives have already demonstrated positive results, with improved enrolment and increased community support for girls being one such positive outcome.

The Cameroon government knows that when everyone in the community is involved in initiatives there is a higher possibility for success. It realises that it must address its

education priorities, including improving the quality and effectiveness of the education system, developing strong partnership with a wide range of different stakeholders, and improving the management and control of the education system.

Further information

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4.50 Quality Enhancement Initiative, Uganda

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Teachers: addressing absenteeism and inadequate capacity Pupils: addressing absenteeism Communities: addressing negative attitudes and limited awareness about education |
| Other issues addressed | Mobilising resources from the government |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Achieve quality education.

Outputs: (a) number of teachers on the payroll has increased; and
(b) gradual improvement in school attendance by pupils, teachers and head teachers.

Outcomes: An evaluation of the initiative outcomes is yet to be conducted.

The Ugandan quality enhancement initiative (QEI) addresses both quality and access, in the way in which it relates to relevance and adequacy in the education sector labour market. The country's 'Four Education Pillars' – pupils, community, teacher, management – if adequately provided for (or their challenges and limitations addressed), will collaboratively assist in making the nation's education service delivery more responsive, efficient and effective.

Implementation and challenges

Additional resources are being allocated for 12 QEI districts, including:

- financial support for development and operations;
- increased teacher numbers to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio;
- development of instructional materials to address the high pupil-book ratio, and to cater for overcrowded classrooms;
- providing teachers' houses and improving schools' sanitation; and
- improving school inspection strategies to increase supervision – at all levels.

The challenges faced by the Ugandan education system in implementing QEI have resulted from inadequate funding for the initiative, as well as insufficient inspection capacity of Ministry of Education and science personnel. If Uganda were to repeat or expand the initiative, it would rationalise resources, by reducing funding for districts which are already 'high on the league table' and redistributing the available funds to more needy schools or districts.

In suggesting other countries introduce a similar initiative to QEI, Uganda recommends that any such programme should be trialled as a pilot first, and that system managers need

to realise that it is highly resource based. Efficiency measures also need to be considered when setting targets for areas of need – such as pupil–teacher and pupil–book ratios.

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4.51 Recognition of Prior Learning, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Further and continuing education |
| Other issues addressed | Providing the country with a qualified workforce |
| Level of initiative | Multi-sector |
| Target beneficiaries | Community members Industry |

Initiative aims

Goal: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has been introduced to bring people (back) into the formal education and training system with a view to equipping the country with a qualified workforce capable of facing the severe economic challenges that are prevailing worldwide.

Objectives: To foster inclusion and promote lifelong learning.

Outputs: Since the introduction of RPL, 48 RPL candidates have acquired a full qualification and 18 RPL candidates have obtained a partial qualification. Currently 25 RPL candidates are undergoing RPL assessment and 33 RPL candidates are building their portfolio. In addition, 143 RPL facilitators and 108 RPL assessors were trained.

Outcomes: Outcomes include:

- (a) less resistance on the part of the target audience;
- (b) a more refined programme, following an audit; and
- (c) better understanding by facilitators of the process and their roles.

A large proportion of the Mauritian workforce does not have any formal qualification but does possess extensive experience. Furthermore, these persons are often located at a particular point in an employing organisation, unable to move higher. Therefore, it becomes very difficult for them to move to other jobs due to the absence of formal qualifications, or even to pursue further studies. They are (to some extent) unable to pursue further qualifications through the standard mechanisms.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) therefore acts as a mechanism for inclusion, by offering access to those people who previously have been left 'outside the mainstream education system'. RPL ensures that an individual's knowledge and skills, arising from any kind of learning environment, are clearly visible and acknowledged. In this way, they can combine and build on previous learning, and be rewarded for it through formal qualifications which allow them to move within the labour market, and to pursue further studies.

In short, RPL responds to the changing demographics of the Mauritian economy by directly tackling the issue of up-skilling and retraining its workforce, while acknowledging their existing skills.

Implementation and challenges

The RPL policy has been reviewed following the first pilot project. In addition, several training sessions for key participants in the RPL system have been provided. The process involves two stages.

An *implementation stage* includes:

- registration of facilitators and assessors;
- sensitisation campaign for potential candidates to make themselves known;
- building of portfolios of candidates with support from facilitators; and
- examination panel and portfolios by assessors followed by interviews.

The *award and certification stage* is co-ordinated centrally by the Mauritius Qualifications Authority with support from other agencies (Mauritius Institute of Training and Development, Mauritius Examinations Syndicate).

Major challenges faced by the RPL programme have included:

- (a) rebuilding the self-esteem of workers (who had to be encouraged to understand the viability of joining the programme); and
- (b) linguistic challenges posed in the construction of the participants' portfolios (especially since the majority of the workers are only semi-literate or had relapsed into illiteracy).

To overcome these challenges, 'hand-holding' and psychological support was provided by facilitators.

For other countries considering a similar RPL initiative, Mauritius recommends that they develop a system which reflects their own specific needs. Although the experiences of other countries may assist in planning, care should be taken to avoid simply copying directly from other existing systems, which may or may not suit other environments.

Further information

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4.52 Roving Caregivers Programme, St Lucia

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Increasing access to early childhood development services |
| Other issues addressed | School readiness and equity in education Parental involvement |
| Level of initiative | Pre-primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Parents Community members Young children |

Initiative aims

- Goals:** Strengthen the care environment for children from birth to three years; provide early childhood stimulation to children from birth to three years who are at risk, by focussing on parents in a home intervention model; and establish a focus on parenting by offering targeted parenting interventions.
- Objectives:** The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the care environment for children between the ages of birth and three years living in situations that place them at risk, by providing them with a solid early childhood development foundation. The initiative also seeks to strengthen the capacity of all participants and stakeholders in the programme, as well as building and sustaining partnerships with all sectors of society, to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the programme within an existing agency, such as the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and Labour.
- Outputs:**
- (a) Parents have acknowledged changes in their parenting styles. These changes have occurred in the areas of hygiene, sanitation practices, disciplinary practices, use of punishment and nutrition. There is a significant improvement in their felt and articulated concept of parenting, their sense of efficacy and competence, and consequent feelings of responsibility where possible.
 - (b) Roving Caregivers Programme (RCP) parents are now more able to identify areas of growth and learning in their children. The longitudinal impact study also shows clearly the change made in the RCP parents' sense of personal responsibility, as caregivers now see themselves as better able to respond to community and society expectations, and better able to fight the influence of drugs and irresponsible behaviour by adults.
 - (c) 'Rovers' (community caregivers) are the connection between the programme and the families. They are the facilitators of the RCP objectives. They are young, energetic and are connected to the families in the areas where RCP is implemented. It is evident that the rovers have benefited from being involved in the RCP. There are increased interactions between parents and children in structured and non-structured meaningful activities, as parents accept their own roles as their children's primary teachers.
 - (d) The rovers have shown greater confidence in themselves, their self-concept and their self-esteem, in their stature in the communities, and in their knowledge of the society and culture. They have gained education benefits in the area of early childhood education, and they have also acquired organisational, communication and presentation skills.

Outcomes: Outcomes identified to date include the following:

- (a) improved verbal and social skills of children participating in the programme are reported by parents and guardians;
- (b) a trained cadre of rovers and supervisors – currently maintained at 30 – with additional potential rovers participating in the training and in attendance;
- (c) the establishment of parenting support groups in all target communities to facilitate parenting education sessions;
- (d) acceptance of the RCP by parents and the community;
- (e) reported changes in parenting practices by participating parents;
- (f) support to families through referrals to agencies such as health and welfare bodies;
- (g) increased awareness and acceptance of the programme at both the community and national levels;
- (h) growth and expansion of the programme into additional neighbouring communities;
- (i) establishment of local community planning committees in all the communities where the programme is being implemented;
- (j) positive impact on cognitive development, especially among younger children, in the study;
- (k) increased parental competence and self-confidence among RCP participants;
- (l) positive impact on stimulating parent-child interactions and storytelling;
- (m) large positive impact on cognitive development of young children – in visual reception, and in fine motor skills;
- (n) gross motor skills and receptive language increase significantly for children who enrol at a younger age; and
- (o) expressive language (speech) has increased more for children who enrol at a later age.

The RCP implementation agency is the early childhood services unit, a department within the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and Labour. This department is now the sole government agency mandated to oversee the establishment, operations and licensing of all early childhood facilities that provide services for children aged from six weeks to five years.⁸⁰

Implementation and challenges

The RCP is managed by a project co-ordinator who plans, organises and co-ordinates all aspects of the project, as well as managing the human, physical and financial resources, to ensure that the project's operating goals are effectively, efficiently and creatively achieved. The co-ordinator is assisted by an assistant co-ordinator, whose primary role involves field supervision, and advocacy.

Five persons have been recruited as project supervisors to work in four identified zones: Monchy and environs, Dennery and environs, Vieux Fort and environs and Anse-La-Raye and environs. Each project supervisor is assigned to a specific region, which comprises a number of settlements. Supervisors work in the field on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, with Wednesdays and Fridays allocated to meetings and training.

Supervisors are expected to organise and supervise programme delivery in the field on a daily basis. They are also required to monitor and evaluate programme implementation

and maintain records on a variety of information, including progress reports on appraisals of rovers, and parent education programme reports. Annual performance appraisals of supervisors and other project staff are conducted, as well as quarterly performance appraisals of all rovers. Supervisors are also expected to transfer newly acquired skills in working with families and communities to a range of local support agencies.

The RCP recruits primarily secondary school graduates to serve as rovers. These rovers work in their home communities making regular, scheduled visits to families where they engage children and parents in stimulation activities that support their development of motor, perceptual, emotional and cognitive skills.

Rovers receive intensive and systematic training in preparation for their work with children and parents. Training sessions are held on a weekly basis and focus on a multiplicity of child development, care and health issues, as well as preparing the rovers for their next week's assignments.

Parents meet on a monthly basis for workshops which focus on various aspects of child development, health, nutrition and other child-related issues. At these workshops, parents are also exposed to different methodologies and strategies to assist them with their child-rearing practices. A practical component requires parents to produce various early stimulation materials for use with their children. Parents are also encouraged to form parent support networks.

Monitoring and evaluating are critical components of the programme. Consequently, supervisors are required to include information on the performance of each rover under their supervision, as part of their monthly reports. A data entry form is used by the rovers to keep track of the number of visits conducted. This also allows for the monitoring and tracking of how often families participate in the programme. To complement this, a checklist is used to track the developmental progress of the children enrolled in the RCP.

A RCP management committee has general oversight for the programme, while local planning committees provide support for the programme at the community level. In the initial stage of implementation, the greatest challenge faced by the RCP was gaining community acceptance and trust. However, by constantly speaking, and advocating with community residents (supported by the obvious satisfaction expressed by families participating in the project), RCP personnel were able to resolve issues of trust and acceptance.

An evaluation of the RCP at the end of 2010 indicated that the children demonstrated significant improvement in all the various developmental domains. In addition, parents' knowledge, skills and practices also exhibited a marked improvement. The rovers' knowledge of child development, health and nutrition and other related issues also improved. At the administrative level, supervisors were introduced to new facilitation strategies and methodologies.

The RCP personnel believe that the programme should be viewed not only as an educational programme but also as a social development programme with the potential to alleviate the basic causes often associated with socially unacceptable behaviour.

Based on its nature and design, the RCP can serve as a co-ordinating body to help social development agencies and programmes reach their target population, avoid duplication, and maximise resources to maintain effective practices.

Significant value is gained from the funds invested in this programme that targets people at the community level, in their homes, during the most critical period of their children's development – and which also provides adults with the knowledge, skills and

competencies required to provide better services. It also allows them to become more productive, contributing and better citizens – a positive investment in the future of any nation.

Further information

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4.53 School health screening programme, South Africa

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Improving the quality of basic education |
| Other issues addressed | Addressing key health barriers to learning |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

- Goals:** Contribute to the improvement of the general health of school-going children and address health barriers to learning in order to improve education outcomes through access to, retention within, and achievement at school.
- Objectives:**
- (a) to provide health preventative and promotion services that address the health needs of school-going children and youth, with regard to their immediate and future health;
 - (b) to support and facilitate learning through early identification and addressing of health barriers to learning;
 - (c) to facilitate access to health and other services, where required; and
 - (d) to support school communities in creating a healthy environment for teaching and learning.
- Outputs:** The direct link between health and educational outcomes has not been measured as the joint programme is still being implemented (since 2010). However, the programme has enabled the identification of health barriers to learning and the provision of services such as oral health care and spectacles to those learners who were referred for further assessment. In 2010, more than 150,000 Grade 1 learners received health screening and in 2011 an estimated 303,143 learners received health screening.
- Outcomes:** As indicated above, the programme is in the developmental stages. As such, formal research has not been conducted to measure impact. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that parents are fully supportive of the programme and accompany their children on the day of screening. In light of the positive steps taken in implementing this programme for Grade 1 learners in 2010 and 2011, the Departments of Health, Basic Education, and Social Development are now working to expand the scope of the programme to cover a more comprehensive package of services, including sexual and reproductive health services, for all learners in the schooling system. This package will be rolled out progressively over the next five years to 27,000 schools, involving twelve million learners.

Ensuring optimal development of all children poses a considerable challenge to South Africa. In addition to addressing the effects of apartheid and underdevelopment, the country is recognised as facing concurrent epidemics. While poverty-related illnesses such as childhood infectious diseases and malnutrition remain widespread, many children face barriers to optimal health and development as a result of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Violence and injuries constitute a further cause of premature deaths and disability, while a growing burden of non-communicable diseases is also evident. As a result, children face many health, social and other challenges that impact on their ability to learn optimally.

Health screening is especially important during the formative school years. Providing special attention to children's optimal health during this period will improve not only their survival, growth and health, but also their learning outcomes and development. In this regard, support for the early childhood years has been proven to have the greatest return on investment.

Implementation and challenges

The school health screening programme is implemented for Grade 1 learners in the most disadvantaged schools – Quintile one schools (no fee schools), as a joint collaboration between the Departments of Basic Education, and Health. Screening focuses primarily on identifying key health barriers to learning.

Accordingly, the following assessments are completed for all Grade 1 learners:

- vision, speech and basic hearing screening;
- measurement of height and weight to assess nutritional status;
- fine and gross locomotor assessment;
- checking immunisation status;
- oral health screening; and
- screening for minor ailments such as skin conditions, and deworming where required.

Screening is conducted by school health nurses and other health professionals, either through ongoing programmes throughout the year or through special School Health Weeks that provide a focus on health resources in schools. Active parental consent for participation in the screening is sought, and parents are encouraged to accompany their children on the day of screening. Learners with health problems are referred to local clinics for further assessment and treatment, together with the provision of personal assistance devices as required.

In order to expand the reach of the programme, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has also formed partnerships with other organisations such as the Transnet Foundation Phelophepa Health Care Train and Colgate Palmolive, which are offering health screening, health education and treatment as part of their outreach services.

The programme is led nationally by a joint task team comprising representatives of the two national departments/ ministries. Similar task teams are formed at provincial and district levels to plan and facilitate implementation. Individual provinces budget for implementing school health services, although this is not optimal; the programme is implemented at school level primarily by school health nurses and other health professionals, where available.

One of the major challenges faced has been a shortage of resources (human and physical) to implement the programme fully; in particular, a lack of skilled health personnel. This has been addressed in the short term by convening the school health weeks, where health professionals from district hospitals and other local clinics assist with the roll-out of services. In the medium to long term, the Department of Health will be appointing additional school health nurses. The DBE is also assisting with the purchase of health screening equipment for schools.

South Africa believes that the close collaboration between the Departments of Health, Basic Education and Social Development has been of paramount importance to the success of the activity. Regular task team meetings at national, provincial and district levels are also necessary to plan targets and identify resource requirements. Other countries considering a similar initiative are advised by South Africa to partner with civil society, the private sector and universities to harness existing capacity and goodwill.

Further information

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4.54 School Improvement Grant, Malawi

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Resources |
| Secondary theme | Devolution |
| Main issue addressed | Education quality through decentralisation |
| Other issues addressed | Access and equity in, and relevance of, education |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |
| | Teachers |
| | Parents |
| | Community members |

Initiative aims

Goal: Increase access and equity in education and improve the quality and relevance of education.

Objective: To decentralise education.

Outputs: Outputs identified to date include:

- (a) reduced absenteeism;
- (b) improved access, especially for orphans and other vulnerable children; and
- (c) increased participation of community members in school management issues and in development projects.

Outcomes: Although the Malawi government is yet to carry out an impact evaluation of the initiative, it already foresees greater community support resulting from implementation of the school improvement grants.

The School Improvement Grant (or direct support to schools) initiative is a response to the challenges that came with the introduction of free primary education. As well as the key objective of decentralising education, other specific objectives of the initiative include decreasing bureaucracy and increasing administrative efficiency.

Direct transfer to schools means that all funds arrive at the school level without any loss to the different administrative levels. In addition, the initiative increases schools' autonomy in making decisions on what they urgently need to procure. The grant has also assisted in making communities realise the importance of making financial and material contributions towards the development of their schools; it instils a sense of ownership among communities.

Schools are expected to develop a school improvement plan (SIP), which they submit to the district education manager as a condition for receiving a school improvement grant for that particular year. The funds are allocated to schools based on enrolment bands established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which means that schools with larger enrolments are expected to receive relatively more funds.

In addition, the allocation of funds also depends on the location of schools: remote rural schools are expected to receive more funds than urban schools located closer to the centre.

When the funds reach the schools' accounts, different stakeholders at the school level decide what they need to buy, based on both the amount received and the guidelines given by the ministry. A high percentage of the funds go to the purchasing of teaching and learning materials. Another component covers small maintenance of school infrastructure and operating costs, such as transport to the suppliers of the materials.

Implementation and challenges

The head teacher, together with members of the school management committee (SMC), the parents and teachers association (PTA), representatives of learners and the school finance committee hold separate meetings to decide on the school's urgent needs, and include these in the SIP. When the funds are deposited in the school's account, the head teacher and chairperson of SMC and/or the PTA have the authority (as signatories) to withdraw money and purchase the required items.

Once the items have been purchased, a meeting is required to inform parents about the school's purchases and how they intend to use the materials. The SMC, PTA and school finance committee members have the obligation of monitoring how the funds are utilised and how the materials are distributed. The head teacher has overall accountability for the grant.

Major programme challenges include inadequate teaching and learning materials, congested classrooms and poor learning outcomes. Other significant challenges include delays in sending funds to school accounts; and the lack of effective monitoring mechanisms – both internal and external; while trained head teachers are sometimes transferred to a school that is not piloted.

Since Malawi is still piloting the initiative, the challenges have not yet been resolved, but they will serve as lessons learned when rolling out the initiative to more districts in the future.

Further information

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4.55 School-based apprenticeships, Australia

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Pathways into the Australian apprenticeship system, further education and employment |
| Level of initiative | Secondary Vocational training |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goal: Provide a pathway into the Australian apprenticeship system, further education and employment.

Outputs: In 2010, there were 18,700 school-based apprenticeship commencements, representing six per cent of the total apprentice and trainee commencements that year, at the national level. This represents an increase on the previous year's proportion at five per cent.

School-based apprenticeships provide school students of legal working age with the opportunity to participate in a part-time Australian apprenticeship while also completing their Senior School Certificate.

Implementation and challenges

A school-based apprenticeship includes a combination of secondary school subjects, paid work and vocational training undertaken on or off the job. The training can be in a traditional trade or other occupation at the Certificate I, II, III, IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma level.

Training is delivered by a registered training organisation (RTO) and may be undertaken for a couple of hours every week or for a longer block of time, although less frequently. This will depend on the requirements of the RTO and the vocational training course. School-based apprentices are required to negotiate time-release from their school subjects to attend work and training, and must arrange to catch up on any school material they miss at a later date.

The number of hours an Australian school-based apprentice needs to be employed per week differs between states and territories, and is based on their individual legislation. Some school-based apprentices can undertake paid employment outside of school hours, such as on the weekend; however others must take time during school hours to work, depending on the requirements of the employer.

The Australian government supports the school-based apprenticeship arrangements through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive Programme, which provides personal benefits to eligible apprentices and financial incentives to their employers. The programme pays a financial incentive of 750 Australian dollars (A\$) to employers of eligible school-based apprentices on commencement, and A\$750 for the retention of the apprentice in an apprenticeship arrangement once they have completed their Year 12 studies. In the 2010–11 financial year, more than 7,700 employers of eligible school-based apprentices received A\$13.9 million in commencement and retention payments.

Organisers of the programme note that participation in school-based apprenticeship arrangements is relatively low when compared to all Australian apprenticeship programmes; however this reflects the difficulties in gaining a part-time Australian apprenticeship and balancing the apprenticeship demands with completing senior schooling.

The joint challenges of catching up with missed school work outside of school hours and completing the employment and training aspects of the programme can make a school-based apprenticeship a very demanding pathway for senior students. Such arrangements require a high level of determination and organisation by all parties.

Further information

Email Various Australian state and territory apprenticeship programme contacts available at www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

4.56 Schools as values-based environments for learning and teaching, Seychelles

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Name of initiative | Quality |
| Country | Devolution |
| Main theme addressed | School improvement, and student behaviour |
| Other themes addressed | Education for empowerment, accountability, and quality of learning |
| Level of initiative | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goals: Improve the quality of learning through a values-based approach to teaching.

Objectives: (a) to equip students with good values that will guide them through life;
(b) to create a more conducive learning environment where students learn to respect and appreciate themselves, their colleagues, teachers and the community; and
(c) to improve the quality of learning through a values-based approach to teaching.

Outputs: Initiative outputs include:

- (a) improved student attendance;
- (b) increase in the number of students selected to sit for national and international exams;
- (c) Beau Vallon Secondary School (BVSS), at which the initiative is being piloted, did exceptionally well in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations in November 2011;
- (d) more than 80 per cent of students are doing homework;
- (e) more parents are becoming involved in school activities;
- (f) a more family-oriented atmosphere exists at the school;
- (g) generally, students are more polite, understanding, responsible and respectful towards others;
- (h) students are involved in weekly level masses and spiritual retreats; and
- (i) the school's achievements have become marketable in such a way that other institutions are seeking its assistance and expertise in various aspects.

Outcomes: Positive outcomes to date include the following improvements identified below:

- (a) The school has made a dramatic turnaround from being labelled 'the country's worst school' in terms of discipline and behaviour.
- (b) Mutual respect and tolerance, as well as collaboration between staff and students are evident and these are helping to give a more positive image to the school.
- (c) Staff and students at BVSS are friendly and courteous towards visitors.
- (d) Contrary to the normal rebellious nature exhibited by teenagers, BVSS students express trust towards their teachers and they feel at ease to confide in them and do not always need to take their problems to the school counsellor.

- (e) Cases of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly so as not to create precedents. The school has succeeded in getting its students to respect the dress code.
- (f) Students keep their shirts and blouses well tucked in throughout school time and also on the road.
- (g) Full collaboration of staff together has helped to enforce this rule.
- (h) Security guards posted at the gates are helping to monitor students' attire as they enter the school's compound.
- (i) Non-teaching staff share a strong sense of belonging to the school and feel valued by the school and its community.
- (j) Students serve on numerous school committees and interact with the teaching staff with ease.
- (k) Students participate in various social activities organised by the school.
- (l) Students' exercise books are usually well kept and covered with neat handwriting and marking is up to date.
- (m) The school enjoys a good relationship with its external agencies and has been assisted on numerous occasions.
- (n) Staff – particularly teachers – are very receptive to comments.

On the whole, a purposeful and relaxed atmosphere prevails at the school.

The concept of living values being incorporated into the school system is a positive step towards the achievement of well-mannered, well-educated and well-adjusted students. These outcomes are made possible by students sharing their ideas and experiences through networking with other secondary schools, which may be confronting social challenges.

The Beau Vallon Secondary School was selected to pilot the 'Living Values' programme by the National Council for Children. The theme chosen was 'schools as values-based environments for learning and teaching'. Initially, there was a sensitisation programme for all staff, assisted by an international consultant. Subsequently, staff were responsible for sensitising students on a number of basic values that they had to practise. Parents were also informed of the initiative at various meetings.

Implementation and challenges

To implement the programme at BVSS, a committee of teachers was set up to monitor a range of values-based initiatives, including those identified below:

- (a) teachers and students were engaged in transforming the school and its environment into values-based learning and teaching;
- (b) classes at each level took weekly turns in maintaining verandas;
- (c) mural paintings depicting living value themes were promoted;
- (d) beautification of the school grounds provided a welcoming and conducive learning atmosphere;
- (e) students' work was displayed in classes;
- (f) specific spots and trees were designated to promote living value themes;
- (g) the school grounds were kept clean and well maintained; and
- (h) colourful mobiles hanging from fruit trees and murals served as constant reminders of the school's aim and vision, and further enhanced the school's environment.

A students' committee was established with the combined aims of:

- promoting the values through weekly talks with senior students;
- organising activities to commemorate important days, e.g. International Women's Day;

- supervising students on school grounds during break time; and
- giving feedback at weekly meetings and discussing activities for the following week.

Students at BVSS have regularly expressed in their own words the benefits they see in their living values initiative:

- ‘The concept of living values has helped us turn from carefree teenagers into more responsible adults.’
- ‘It made us realise that we are not alone in our fears, in our doubts or in our experience.’
- ‘Networking has improved our communication skills with fellow youths, with teachers and with parents as well.’
- ‘We have learned that a positive outlook and attitude make very difficult situations turn into more manageable incidences.’
- ‘Networking has given us the chance to develop our acting ability in skits and drama, our poetic inclination and our skill in oration.’
- ‘It gave us an opportunity to gain deeper insight into ourselves and share it with other students.’
- ‘Networking with other secondary schools is not just a sharing but a learning experience as well.’
- ‘Whatever little steps we take towards the achievement of this goal, we are proud to make because we believe in the saying “a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”.’

Nevertheless, maintaining the commitment and interest of all stakeholders has been a challenge for the school. In response, awards and certificates were introduced to motivate teachers. Time constraints provided another challenge, as most living values work had to be done after school hours.

In some situations, help was sought and provided by NGOs such as the Campaign for Awareness Resilience and Education which organised programmes tailored to cater for students with the most undesirable behaviour. Securing finance for the many different activities was difficult, although the BVSS Parents and Teachers Association helped to seek sponsorship.

If implementing a value-based programme elsewhere, BVSS recommends undertaking a proper needs assessment first, to establish the status of the problem within the organisation. Involvement of partners is important in the planning stages, since they need to have a sense of belonging to the initiative from the start.

The BVSS head teacher recommends reviewing the process regularly as well as ensuring that proper documentation is kept, to ensure continuity. Of equal importance if implementing the initiative elsewhere is to be receptive to criticism – and always to keep an open mind.

Further information

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4.57 Second chance programme, Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Inclusivity and employability of marginalised youth |
| Other issues addressed | Improved literacy and numeracy skills of marginalised youth Psychological and sociological support for marginalised youth Social reintegration |
| Level of initiative | Young people (16–21) |
| Target beneficiaries | Community members Marginalised youth |

Initiative aims

Goal: Reintegration of marginalised youth into society and provision of a pathway for them to technical and vocational education and training () courses, and eventually to the world of work

Objectives: (a) to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of marginalised youth;
(b) award of a National Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy pitched at level one on the National Qualifications Framework;
(c) to provide psychological and sociological back-up to marginalised youth and support them in their integration into society; and
(d) to enhance the employability of marginalised youth.

Outputs: (a) since the implementation of the second chance programme in 2009, of the 702 young people enrolled (year 2009 and year 2010) in the programme, 444 (excluding year 2011, as still awaiting results) successfully completed the programme for both Mauritius and Rodrigues, resulting in an overall success rate of 63 per cent; and
(b) a tracer study conducted with ex-students after the course (286 respondents) revealed that 21 per cent of the young people were able to integrate into the labour market in the years 2009 and 2010, and 16 per cent have been able to integrate into vocational courses.

Outcomes: The participants have developed functional literacy and numeracy skills that will help them in everyday life, and help them to improve their self-esteem, as well as enhancing their employability and capacity to reintegrate into society. The programme helps in the reduction of the illiteracy rate, and at the same time creates a pathway for those vulnerable young people to obtain formal training.

Every year a significant number of young people drop out of the educational system without any formal qualifications, which can render them unemployable. These young people often fall victim to various social troubles.

The programme has been initiated to promote reintegration of marginalised youngsters aged between 16 and 21 year, offering an initiation into literacy and numeracy. After having successfully completed this initial training programme, trainees are eligible to either follow a basic course in vocational training, or to be enrolled in the apprenticeship scheme.

This initiative provides a new opportunity for education system ‘dropouts’ to acquire literacy and numeracy skills, for greater opportunities for reintegration into socio-economic environments, thus promoting the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Implementation and challenges

This programme is being implemented by the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources. The MITD conducts a sensitisation campaign, with the support of non-government organisations (NGOs) and various ministries, to reach the target population. Based on the locations of prospective students, sites for the delivery of this programme are chosen to provide ease of access.

The Government of Mauritius had made provisions under the Human Resource, Knowledge and Arts Fund for financing the second chance programme in the budgets for the period 2009 to 2011. From 2012, the project is being managed by the MITD and will be funded by the government.

A co-ordinator is responsible for the implementation of the training programme, and three supervisors have been appointed to monitor training and to ensure quality assurance. Trainers involved in the delivery of the functional literacy and numeracy component have undergone training to develop their pedagogical skills, and to assist them to deliver the training more effectively. The Mauritius Examinations Syndicate is the awarding body for the programme and ensures quality assurance in assessment.

The curriculum comprises three modules and is of 300 hours' duration. The performance of trainees is assessed in all three modules, with assessment comprising four oral assessments and two written papers. A Basic Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy is awarded to successful candidates upon completion of the course.

To motivate young people to enter and complete the second chance programme, participants receive a monthly stipend of 1500 Mauritian rupees (MRs) (US\$50), refunds for travelling costs, and free learning materials. This financial incentive is funded by the government.

The main challenge MITD encountered was to reach the target population and convince them to enrol in the programme. Sensitisation campaigns were implemented before the start of courses, with the collaboration of government and non-government organisations. Media support was also arranged, comprising radio and television spots, newspaper articles, and posters and flyers to help disseminate information. Meetings were conducted in different localities of the country with the collaboration of social workers ('Educateurs de Rue'), NGOs, citizen advice bureau officers and other partners.

A high rate of absenteeism was initially noted among the trainees. To remedy this, the terms of payment of the stipend were redefined on a pro-rata basis, taking into consideration the attendance of trainees.

Mauritius believes that the collaboration of NGOs, social workers and government institutions is essential for the successful implementation of the programme; it is very important to provide adequate financial incentives to motivate young people to join the programme.

To improve this programme, organisers believe that it would be advisable to make provision for all participants to obtain further training or to be enrolled as apprentices, immediately after the completion of their training. This inability to ensure a logical follow-on activity or opportunity for all those participants completing the programme is a significant challenge to address.

Further information

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4.58 Special Bilingual Education Programme (SBEP), Cameroon

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Alternative |
| Secondary theme | Quality |
| Main issue addressed | Bilingual education to improve quality and skills of learners |
| Other issues addressed | Intensive English for French-speaking learners (language module) Intensive French for English-speaking learners Immersive module (a non-linguistic subject taught in target languages; co- curricular module) |
| Level of initiative | Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers |

Initiative aims

Goal: Use secondary education to create bilingual citizens.

Objectives: To produce bilingual students and to provide a bilingual certificate through an English-French bilingual education for English-speaking and French-speaking secondary education students.

Outputs: Tangible benefits are yet to be identified.

Outcomes: Respect and understanding of Francophone culture by Anglophones; and similarly of Anglophone culture by Francophones.

The issue of bilingualism is vital in Cameroon. Since independence and the establishment of a small number of bilingual schools, there has been no bilingual syllabus. This initiative is of great importance within Cameroon's broader education system as it will provide more job opportunities for bilingual citizens and increase higher education opportunities.

Implementation and challenges

The Special Bilingual Education Programme involves developing a five-year secondary education syllabus with three modules:

- a language module, (inclusive, English or French);
- an immersive module taught in the target language; and
- a co-curricular module (out of classroom).

At the central level, documents are conceived by national inspectors under the supervision of an Inspector of Pedagogy; at the regional level, the follow-up component is carried out by regional inspectors under the supervision of a co-ordinating inspector; and at the school level, teaching is done by teachers under the co-ordination of a 'focal point'.

There have been some major challenges involved in the implementation of the initiative. Although it is clear that a functional use of French and English languages needs to be arrived at by learners, a programme assessment is yet to be completed as the initiative is still in the pilot phase.

Further information

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4.59 Strengthening foundation phase teacher education, South Africa

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| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Management |
| Main issue addressed | Teacher education |
| Other issues addressed | Enhancing the capacities of universities |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Teachers University education faculties |

Initiative aims

Goal: Enhanced capacity of universities to prepare more and better-prepared foundation phase teachers, especially African language teachers.

Objectives: To increase capacity through a holistic programme designed to strengthen initial professional and foundation phase teacher education by a focus on research programme, and materials development in universities.

Outputs: Outputs to date include:

- (a) a greater number of students enrolling specifically as foundation phase teachers;
- (b) a higher number of universities involved in preparing teachers for this phase; and
- (c) a strong research community of practice emerging.

Outcomes: Wider access by schools to skilled foundation phase teachers.

South Africa has identified strengthening the teacher education system to better meet the needs of teachers across all education sectors, including pre-schooling and post-schooling as a key current priority for education in the country.

Recent policies and guidelines directed towards achieving that priority include: an integrated strategic planning framework for teacher education and development in South Africa (2011); and minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (2011).

Implementation and challenges

Foundation phase education is the start of quality learning: it is essential that the building blocks are effectively placed in this phase. However, in South Africa there is currently an inadequate number of foundation phase teachers available, especially African languages' foundation phase teachers.

This situation is exacerbated by the fact that only a limited number of universities are offering programmes for this foundation phase.

Implementation of the initiative to strengthen foundation phase teaching is being undertaken through a series of related activities:

- research, programme development and materials development projects at universities;
- providing funds for employment of new staff at universities;
- supporting postgraduate studies in the field and in early childhood education;
- supporting the establishment of a research journal and a research association in early childhood education; and
- bursary funding to provide for foundation phase initial teacher education.

Challenges currently being faced include the ability of universities and staff to participate fully, given the demanding workloads on personnel that already exist in this sector.

For other countries considering a similar activity, South Africa advises that it is imperative to understand what is seen to be important in the field, and to integrate this into the initiative, in order that it is supported fully and that it aligns with the needs of the country.

Further information

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4.60 Support for Disadvantaged Students, Australia

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| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Resources |
| Main issue addressed | Improving literacy and numeracy |
| Other issues addressed | Improving engagement and education outcomes of disadvantaged students Indigenous students Improving teacher quality Support for students with disability Promoting equity in education |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students, including those who are disadvantaged and/or from low socio-economic backgrounds, indigenous students and students with special learning needs and disability Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

- Goals:**
- (a) support states and territories to implement systemic and sustainable education reform that will improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, strengthen the capacity of disadvantaged school and drive quality and continuous improvement in teaching; and
 - (b) ensure Australian schools and teachers are better able to support students with disability, contributing to improved student learning experiences, educational outcomes and transitions to further education or work.
- Objectives:**
- (a) to improve the quality, equity and transparency of Australia's education system;
 - (b) to contribute to the provision of world-class education in Australia by setting out the knowledge, skills and understandings needed for life and work in the twenty-first century and by setting common high standards of achievement across the country; and
 - (c) to provide a clear, shared understanding of what young people should be taught and the quality of learning expected of them, regardless of their circumstances, the type of school that they attend or the location of their school.
- Outputs:** The Smarter Schools National Partnerships national evaluation has identified a range of impacts, activities and interventions at the systemic levels through to individual teachers, schools, classrooms and students.
- (a) Systemic-level benefits:
 - considerable co-investment by the jurisdictions as partners with the Australian government;
 - instances where jurisdictions are integrating and aligning the Smarter Schools National Partnerships to maximise impact;
 - instances where the Smarter Schools National Partnerships effort is integrated with major jurisdictional priorities and initiatives to provide leverage for a whole-of-system change;

- growing recognition of the importance of cross-sectoral capacity to ensure school improvement;
- collaborative teacher development within and across both jurisdictions and sectors; and
- spreading devolution of decision-making to school principals.

(b) Teacher-level benefits:

- emerging professional structures that can underpin reform and better pathways into teaching, including those for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- establishment of school centres of excellence for pre-service practice, internship and ongoing support;
- trials of approaches to recruiting high-quality staff for hard-to-staff schools; and
- embedding of improved performance management approaches to support continuous improvement in teacher quality and the engagement of many leading teachers as leaders of teaching.

(c) School- and classroom-level benefits:

- increasing focus on the skill and knowledge of teachers for effective classroom practice;
- increasing in-class support from coaches and tutors;
- recognition of the importance of data analysis to inform pedagogy and practice;
- emerging identification of the learning tools that lead to improvement;
- identification of analytical tools to measure and understand learning issues and teacher performance; and
- linking teacher professional development within the context of whole school reform strategies.

(d) Student-level benefits:

- growing recognition of the imperative to improve student performance and expectations; and
- the inclusion of in and out of classroom strategies to minimise barriers to educational achievement, and the emergence of new models of student engagement.

Outcomes: Through direct and indirect funding support to schools, the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership, and the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership allow schools to adopt flexible, locally-based solutions to local contexts and challenges in ways not previously seen. Work associated with the Smarter Schools National Partnerships programme has generated considerable enthusiasm and a sense of revitalisation in schools. Impact can be seen through a discernible shift in school culture towards a student-centred focus as well as significant improvements in classroom teaching and practice, through initiatives such as coaching and mentoring to strengthen pedagogy in literacy and numeracy, increased use of data to inform teaching and learning, opening up of classrooms to external assessors and consultants, and teachers working together to support student learning outcomes.

The Australian government provides supplementary funds to support reform and implementation in key policy areas through National Partnership Agreements with the

states and territories. The Smarter Schools National Partnerships include three schooling National Partnerships:

- (a) literacy and numeracy: supporting teachers and schools to focus effort on the approaches that are the most effective in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes;
- (b) low socio-economic status school communities: providing support for schools in disadvantaged communities to improve student outcomes; and
- (c) improving teacher quality: recognising that teacher quality is the single greatest in-school influence on student engagement and achievement.⁸¹

A related programme, the More Support for Students with Disability initiative will provide 200 million Australian dollars (A\$) in additional funding to government and non-government education authorities to support their work with students with disability and/or learning difficulties. This will be achieved through the selection of a range of activities based on the needs of students, teachers and schools.

Implementation and challenges

(a) *Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership*⁸²

A\$540 million has been provided over four years (2008–09 to 2011–12), comprising up to A\$500 million for education authorities and A\$40 million for strategic initiatives. Over the first two years, A\$150 million was allocated to education authorities to facilitate literacy and numeracy reform activities. The remaining A\$350 million is available to reward education authorities for achievement of agreed literacy and numeracy performance targets.

Distribution of facilitation funding is based on each state and territory's share of students at or below the national minimum National Assessment Programme – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)⁸³ standards in reading and numeracy for Years 3, 5 and 7 in 2010. States were afforded the opportunity to select schools for participation, based on their capacity to benefit from the investment. In several jurisdictions, these were not the schools with the lowest performance in literacy and numeracy outcomes. \$A40 million is also being directed to strategic initiatives that will increase understanding of what works to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes and contribute to a national evidence base.

(b) *Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership*⁸⁴

This national partnership provides A\$1.5 billion over seven years (2008–09 to 2014–15) to assist the lowest socio-economic status schools in the country to overcome disadvantage and support improved student well-being and learning outcomes. Schools have been selected on the basis of relative community disadvantage, using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, or state-based measures. Education authorities have been given the opportunity to add or replace participating schools, based on local measures of disadvantage and existing investments being made in these schools.

Education authorities have the flexibility to decide how they implement specific reforms and how funding is allocated to schools. The level of funding each school receives varies considerably, depending on the reforms being implemented, the school size and location. A proportion of national partnership funding may be retained by some jurisdictions for system/sector-wide initiatives, such as the delivery of system-wide professional learning, development of resources or personnel. (For example, in South Australia some national partnership schools do not receive direct funding support; however they can access national partnership funds held at the regional level on a needs basis. In New South Wales, the bulk of funding is allocated directly to schools, with large schools receiving in excess of A\$1 million over four years.)

(c) *More Support for Students with Disability*

This initiative will be implemented through a national partnership agreement with state and territory governments and funding agreements with the non-government sector.

Under these agreements, states and territories have the flexibility to select activities that will best assist teachers and schools in their work with students with disability. Implementation plans which detail the activities jurisdictions have selected to implement under this initiative have been developed and are publically available on the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations website.

Further information

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4.61 Technical workshop on pan-Canadian Aboriginal data, Canada

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Access |
| Secondary theme | Equity |
| Main issue addressed | Improved data on Aboriginal learners in Canada |
| Other issues addressed | Aboriginal education, education data and indicators, equity and access in education |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary Tertiary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders Parents Community members Education system administrators |

Initiative aims

Goal: Improved data on Aboriginal learners in Canada.

Objectives: (a) examine approaches to encourage Aboriginal students to self-identify;
 (b) increase the comparability of data on Aboriginal learners across the country and across multiple jurisdictions;
 (c) explore a methodology for self-identification that supports pan-Canadian data collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on Aboriginal students; and
 (d) encourage knowledge mobilisation and transfer, facilitate dialogue, and create new partnerships.

Outputs: Accurate pan-Canadian Aboriginal data to provide shared solutions to common problems.

Outcomes: This initiative will improve the state of data relating to Aboriginal learners so that progress may be better measured as Canadian governments work toward eliminating the gaps in educational attainment and graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC) and Statistics Canada are working together on an overall pan-Canadian education data strategy, and deputy ministers of education have asked that Aboriginal indicators and planning on pan-Canadian Aboriginal data collection be incorporated into the main strategy.

The purpose of this workshop was, therefore, to provide input at an early stage into this work. Participants shared challenges and solutions, and gave guidance on practical priorities for work on data at the pan-Canadian level.

Implementation and challenges

Participants at the workshop comprised individuals with technical expertise from provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education, regional and national Aboriginal organisations, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the First Nations Statistical Institute, and Statistics Canada.

The workshop focused on technical issues facing the collection and analysis of Aboriginal data in Canada, and featured both panel discussions and break-out groups, providing an effective forum for experts working in this field throughout the country.

A greater awareness, at a pan-Canadian level, of the data needs surrounding Aboriginal learners has since developed. The workshop also presented an opportunity for those working with Aboriginal data to network and work on shared solutions. Aboriginal groups invited to the workshop presented their views and opinions on the state of Aboriginal data and worked with government representatives in a spirit of openness and collaboration.

Although the workshop was a one-time event hosted by the CMEC in partnership with other levels of government, ongoing work to improve Aboriginal data is continuing to take place as a follow-up to the forum, and while the CMEC technical workshop was a significant step toward better data, further progress remains to be made.

Further information

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4.62 Training for untrained teachers (by distance education) in primary schools, Solomon Islands

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Primary theme | Quality |
| Secondary theme | Alternative |
| Main theme addressed | Improved learning and teaching, and quality education management |
| Level of initiative | Primary Secondary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers School leaders |

Initiative aims

Goals: Improving quality of teaching and learning, and learning outcomes.

Objectives: To revise and develop the curriculum.

Outputs: More than 400 untrained teachers are trained in teaching the national curriculum; (later, this this will involve a much wider group).

Outcomes: It is too early to indicate correlation with learning results from students.

Improving quality is now the main goal of Solomon Islands' National Education Action Plan, 2013–2015. Teacher training of 'untrained' teachers by distance education, with support from mentors (master teachers and head teachers), is a Solomon Islands' strategy to achieve improved quality. Currently teacher training materials are being reviewed and converted into effective and attractive distance learning materials. In this way, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) believes it can address a national problem in a reasonably quick and efficient manner.

Implementation and challenges

The management of the initiative is outsourced by the Ministry to a selected group of developers/trainers from the teacher training college, and a group of selected master teachers who work with clusters of schools.

Managing time, resources (funds and human resources) and the timely development of new curriculum materials for different subjects has proved challenging. As a result, the project has suffered from some implementation delays.

In recommending the initiative to other countries, MEHRD suggests that organisers ensure they have enthusiastic and sufficient staff to manage the project. Organisers also need to confirm they have the full collaboration of, and understanding by, management within the selected delivery institution, and that they plan funding and human resources issues precisely.

Early planning should promote distance education to stakeholders and potential clients, not only as an efficient alternative, but also as having the same – or even better – quality than standard learning modes.

And to ensure an efficiently managed budget, Solomon Islands recommends explicitly linking the contracting and payment of curriculum writers to agreed outputs.

Further information

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4.63 University strategic planning, Papua New Guinea

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Management |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Motivating staff and students to overcome social, political, economic and cultural challenges |
| Other issues addressed | Creating employable graduates, able to contribute to nation building Contributing quality research |
| Level of initiative | Tertiary students Tertiary lecturers and staff Adult/continuing |
| Target beneficiaries | Students Teachers Lecturers (tertiary) School or institution leaders/managers Education system administrators Government employees |

Initiative aims

Goals: Employable graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to nation building, and enhanced quality of Papua New Guinean tertiary education.

Objectives: The Divine Word University's 2012 theme/objective is titled The Power of Positive Vision which aims at motivating staff and students to overcome social, political, economic and cultural challenges while offering a quality education in the complex Papua New Guinea (PNG) context.

Outputs:

- (a) the enrolment rate has increased rapidly and for the last three years, with 54 per cent of enrolments comprising women;
- (b) through its partnerships with different overseas universities, the institution is able to enhance the quality of its academic programmes; and
- (c) use of advanced information and communication technology (each student at Divine Word University (DWU) is provided with a laptop to assist in their studies, as well as access to extensive databases).

Outcomes:

- (a) Enrolments are substantially higher, with increasing applications from prospective students to study across all programmes.
- (b) Tracking of graduates shows that most are employed after completing their studies.
- (c) Potential employers visit the university annually to interview about-to-graduate students as potential employees.
- (d) Activities and programmes are regularly reviewed through DWU induction and review weeks that are conducted at the beginning and end of the academic year.
- (e) A successful external academic audit was conducted, the first to be carried out by a university in PNG.

Implementation and challenges

The Papua New Guinea Government Vision 2050 aims to develop PNG into a 'wise, healthy and well-educated nation' (Papua New Guinea Department of Education, 2012). DWU's initiative contributes directly to the implementation of the first objective of

the national vision, which calls on the universities to build a qualified, committed, and ethically-oriented workforce.

One of the main challenges facing PNG has been the lack of qualified academics in the country. Thus, the university has entered into partnerships with universities in Australia – and through this partnership, the university is developing skilled researchers and academic staff. By introducing international academic standards, DWU has been able to guide and prepare its staff for quality academic and administrative services.

In terms of graduate numbers, DWU is currently graduating the highest number of graduates in the country, and is confident that its innovative approach to offering a comprehensive range of education opportunities is improving the quality of education generally, as well as ensuring its own students graduate with necessary competencies. The university believes that its quality of education and sound philosophy of life will assist in making a positive change in PNG and help to meet the PNG government's vision for the future.

Further information

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4.64 Zones d'éducation prioritaires – ZEP (Education priority areas), Mauritius

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Primary theme | Devolution |
| Secondary theme | Access |
| Main issue addressed | Additional support to most needy pupils |
| Other issues addressed | School environment |
| Level of initiative | Primary |
| Target beneficiaries | Students |

Initiative aims

Goals:

- (a) ensure that all pupils attend school;
- (b) help vulnerable children complete primary education with the longer term goal of breaking the poverty cycle; and
- (c) increase completion and pass rates at the end of the primary education cycle.

Objectives:

- (a) increase the attendance rate of pupils in ZEP schools;
- (b) better implementation of differentiated pedagogy in schools;
- (c) improve the school climate to make schools more welcoming to children and their parents; and
- (d) improve parental participation.

Outputs: The pass rate has increased from 30.9 per cent in 2003 to 35.6 per cent in 2011. Eleven schools had a pass rate higher than 40 per cent in 2011, with six having maintained that rate for five consecutive years. Absenteeism rates in ZEP schools have decreased from 15.7 per cent in 2007⁸⁵ to 11.7 per cent in 2011.

Outcomes: Identified outcomes include:

- (a) improvement in the school infrastructure;
- (b) enhanced and structured collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector;
- (c) improved parental involvement within the school community;
- (d) improved attendance;
- (e) improved performance (although marginal);
- (f) more teachers are willing to work in the ZEP schools; and
- (g) relations within the school community are improving (although an occasional difference of opinion still occurs).

The initiative specifically targets schools situated in, or close to, pockets of poverty in the country. These areas are not only poor but are affected by complex socio-economic issues that permeate into the school community. These issues lead to:

- high rates of pupil absenteeism;
- indiscipline and tense relations within the school community;
- low parental involvement;
- poor teacher motivation;
- low attainment and performance; and
- a stigma attached to (these) schools.

The failure rate at the national primary education level has been significantly high, at more than 30 per cent, year after year. The failure rate in ZEP schools has been even more worrying, being above 60 per cent. Given the severity of the situation, it was deemed necessary to provide additional support to these specific low-performing schools.

Failure to obtain the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) usually leads to students dropping out of the formal education system into poverty, and adds to the socio-economic problems of the national regions and the country.

The ZEP Project was introduced by the government in 2003, targeting 30 primary schools (from pockets of poverty) with pass rates below 40 per cent in the CPE examinations for five consecutive years prior to 2003. The components of the strategy can best be summarised as: providing additional support to pupils, parents and teachers; improving school infrastructure and facilities; and harnessing additional resources.⁸⁶

Implementation and challenges

A budget of approximately 50 million Mauritian rupees (MRs) (US\$1.7 million) is allocated to the ZEP project, and is expended on the following activities:

- motivation allowance to all staff in ZEP schools;
- allowance of cluster co-ordinators and parent mediators (part-timers);
- supplementary food programme to provide food items to all pupils;
- grants provided for running of schools; and
- costs associated with implementation measures including:
 - investment in infrastructural work to improve the school environment;
 - enhanced collaboration with NGOs and the private sector; and
 - building rapport with school communities.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources has established a ZEP unit comprising a project manager, four cluster co-ordinators, four school inspectors and seven part-time parent mediators to focus on the needs in ZEP schools, and to work in close collaboration with the zone directorates responsible for all schools in each educational zone.

Although showing positive results, a number of challenges remain, including: providing a quality education service; changing the existing mindsets of parents, pupils and teachers; implementing differentiated learning approaches, (which educators find difficult because of the significant differences in the academic levels of their pupils); and improving basic literacy and numeracy.

The Mauritius Institute of Education is also working with educators in ZEP schools on a literacy project to improve literacy levels in these schools. School inspectors are providing support to educators on pedagogical strategies and tools, through regular class visits.

If implementing a similar programme elsewhere, ZEP unit personnel believe it is important to adapt the project to the existing social context; to formulate a mission and vision statement with all partners and to ensure that it is shared by all; to implement a coherent action plan; and to monitor and evaluate all indicators regularly, in order to fine-tune the implementation.

Other implementation options to consider include replacing the motivation allowance provided to all school staff by a performance-based allowance, payable only to staff that meet a specified target. A further enhancement would be to commit to a specific time frame, with a set evaluation and reporting schedule defined in the project design.

Further information

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Notes

- 1 Outputs and outcomes have been identified by the participating countries, based on their own understanding of these two terms (and the differences between them).
- 2 Tasmania will change from three terms per year to four terms per year, from 2013.
- 3 Further information available at: www.acara.edu.au/curriculum.html.
- 4 Pre-primary refers to educational pre-school programmes, primarily designed for four year olds; primary includes Kindergarten to Years 6 or 7 depending on the state/territory. Sources: Schools Australia 2011, ABS catalogue 4221.0; National Pre-school Census 2010, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and All Students.
- 5 'Grandfathers' are described in this context as persons who are beyond the age of 45, have at least ten years' experience in early childhood care and education, and who have no formal training.
- 6 Background data identified from a number of sources including The Bahamas Ministry of Education website: www.bahamaseducation.com; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 7 Data in table refers only to public schools and not to the private institutions which are the focus of The Bahamas' initiative.
- 8 Upazila are sub-districts, and are similar to similar to county subdivisions in some Western countries.
- 9 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Bangladesh Ministry of Education website: www.moedu.gov.bd; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 10 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Barbados Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development website: www.mes.gov.bb; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 11 Background data identified from a number of sources including official Cameroon government publications, available at: www.spm.gov.cm; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 12 Background data identified from a number of sources including Council of Ministers of Education, Canada: www.cmec.ca/11/About/index.html; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 13 Background data identified from a number of sources Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica website: www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/; the EMIS website for Dominica: <http://emis.education.gov.dm/>; Commonwealth Education Online at: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website, www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 14 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of The Gambia Ministry for Basic and Secondary Education website: www.edugambia.gm; and the Commonwealth of Nations website www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 15 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of Grenada Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development website: www.gov.gd/ministries/education.html; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 16 Background data identified from a number of sources including Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 17 Background data identified from a number of sources including Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 18 There are two categories of primary school: day primaries, which make up the majority of schools, and boarding schools, which are divided into low-, medium- and high-cost schools.
- 19 Most government-aided schools are boarding schools, while private schools offer British O-Levels, followed by A-Levels or the International Baccalaureate.
- 20 As of 2008, the Kenyan government has introduced plans to offer free secondary education to all.
- 21 Background data identified from a number of sources including the MoE Kenya website: www.education.go.ke; the Kenya Investment Authority: www.investmentkenya.org; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 22 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of Malawi website: www.malawi.gov.mw; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 23 Background data identified from a number of sources including UNESCO IBE (2010d); the Government of Malaysia website: www.moe.gov.my; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 24 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of Malta Ministry of Education and Employment website: <https://www.education.gov.mt>; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 25 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of Mauritius website: www.gov.mu/portal/site/education; SACMEQ, 2012a; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.

- 26 Background data identified from a number of sources including SACMEQ website: www.sacmeq.org; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 27 Background data identified from a number of sources including MoE Namibia website: www.moe.gov.na; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 28 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of Papua New Guinea website: www.education.gov.pg; and the Commonwealth of Nations website www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 29 The Ministry of Education's School Improvement Programme was shortlisted in the 2006 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards.
- 30 Background data identified from a number of sources including Ministry of Education Seychelles website: www.education.gov.sc; SACMEQ website: www.sacmeq.org/; US Library of Congress reports: www.country-studies.com; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 31 Singapore Ministry of Education (2011) *Education in Singapore*, 4.
- 32 There are currently five polytechnics in Singapore: Singapore Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic and Republic Polytechnic.
- 33 The National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University each had more than 30,000 students in 2009.
- 34 Background data identified from a number of sources including the MoE Singapore website: www.moe.gov.sg/education/education-statistics-digest; and from the data relating to Singapore in Department of Education, WA (2006).
- 35 Provincial secondary schools were established in the 1980s to expand the number of junior secondary school places. They have since expanded to offer places to students in Forms 4 and 5. In many cases the facilities available, such as libraries, science laboratories and dormitories, have not been expanded.
- 36 Background data identified from a number of sources including Solomon Islands Government (2007); Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 37 Background data identified from a number of sources including South African Government Information (2012); Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 38 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka website: www.moe.gov.lk; Mysrilanka.com (2012); Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 39 Pre-school education is one of three levels of childcare service offered in the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis. Each service is provided in a different type of facility or centre, specifically designed for that purpose.
- 40 The Caribbean Examinations Council, established in 1972 by an agreement among 15 English-speaking Commonwealth Caribbean countries and territories, provides examinations and certification at secondary and post-secondary levels. The Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate examination is for students at the end of the secondary education cycle; the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations for post-secondary students entering the world of work and for those candidates who wish to continue their further education at the tertiary level.
- 41 The Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate examination is for students at the end of the secondary education cycle. The Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination is for post-secondary students entering the world of work and for those candidates who wish to continue their further education at the tertiary level.
- 42 Background data identified from a number of sources including the MoE St Kitts and Nevis website: www.moeskn.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 43 Most recent statistics available – 2010/11.
- 44 See footnote 40.
- 45 See: www.salcc.edu.lc
- 46 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Ministry of Education, HRD and Labour St Lucia website: www.education.gov.lc/; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 47 Background data identified from a number of sources including UNESCO IBE (2007b); European Commission (2008); the Government of St Vincent and the Grenadines website: www.gov.vc/; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 48 In January 2009, the Presidential Initiative on AIDS was selected as a finalist in the 2009 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The initiative is aimed at preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS among students and has, since 2003, inspired a variety of initiatives reaching 7.5 million children in 14,816 primary schools.
- 49 Background data identified from a number of sources including Ministry of Education and Sports Uganda: www.education.go.ug; SACMEQ data on Uganda: www.sacmeq.org; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 50 The UK Government is currently reviewing the national curriculum, exploring options for reducing its scope. The revised curriculum is expected to be taught in schools from September 2013.

- 51 Background data identified from a range of sources including: the Commonwealth of Nations website <http://www.commonwealth-of-nations.org/>, from the (UK) Department for Education Annual Report and Accounts 2010–11; for the year ended 31 March 2011; and from the British Council website at: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/>
- 52 In January 2009, the British Council/Department for International Development's Global School Partnerships was selected as a finalist in the 2009 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards.
- 53 Background data identified from a number of sources including the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania website: www.tanzania.go.tz/; SACMEQ data on Tanzania: www.sacmeq.org; Commonwealth Education Online: www.cedol.org; and the Commonwealth of Nations website: www.commonwealth-of-nations.org.
- 54 Data identified (except tertiary) identified from UNESCO IBE (2010f).
- 55 See: United Republic of Tanzania (2008).
- 56 Note that International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) definitions have been used to define pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- 57 See: www.aedi.org.au
- 58 The AEDI is based on the Early Development Instrument (EDI), developed by the Offord Centre in British Columbia, Canada. Australia is the only country in the world to implement the EDI as a national collection.
- 59 An observation schedule designed to allow teachers, speech therapists and others to assess classroom features that support communication based on a systematic review of evidence.
- 60 COAG is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association, see: www.coag.gov.au
- 61 See: www.acara.edu.au
- 62 'Digital natives' are often defined as people who have grown up in the digital world using technology as a way to communicate, record, educate and understand society.
- 63 In 2004, Namibia adopted Vision 2030, a document that defines the country's development programmes and strategies to achieve its national objectives. It focusses on eight themes to realise the country's long term vision.
- 64 First Nations, *Métis* and *Inuit* are the three groups of Canadian aboriginal peoples.
- 65 Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Floor 3, MITD House, Phoenix, Mauritius.
- 66 The Financial Services Commission is responsible for managing proper administration of the pensions, securities and insurance laws, see: www.fscjamaica.org.
- 67 Junior Achievement Jamaica is dedicated to educating students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy through experimental and hands-on programmes, see: www.jajamaica.org.
- 68 Sometimes referred to as 'green skills', skills for sustainability are the technical skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community.
- 69 In 2007, 42 per cent of 9,303 teachers were untrained (MoE Guyana, 2008: 32).
- 70 Grade R refers to the reception-level class; it is also called Grade 0.
- 71 In Diepsloot (an informal settlement north of Johannesburg) where the training is now being offered through a private outreach organisation, more than 100 applicants have applied to do the course. This is indicative of demand and of the practitioners' desire to complete this particular training as they are expected to pay a small amount of money to register for the training course. In most instances, Grade R training is offered by non-governmental organisations to practitioners at no cost to themselves.
- 72 The term *code-switching* refers to alternations of language within a single conversation, often involving switches within a single speaker turn or a single sentence.
- 73 A qualified teacher is one with at least the Auxiliary Certificate. Source of data: Pre-school Unit, Ministry of Education, submitted March 2011.
- 74 See: www.naplan.edu.au
- 75 ACARA was established under the ACARA Act and has a Board comprising nominees from each state and territory, the National Catholic Education Commission, the Independent Schools Council of Australia and the Australian government. ACARA is answerable to the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (formerly MCEECDYA); Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) website, see: www.acara.edu.au
- 76 The NAP is run at the direction of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC), formerly the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). It includes the National Assessment Programme - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), the three-yearly sample assessments in Science Literacy, Civics and Citizenship, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Literacy, and participation in international sample assessments.
- 77 See: www.acara.edu.au
- 78 See also: section 4.60 Support for Disadvantaged Students, Australia.
- 79 Copies of the 2011 reports are available at: www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Pages/ssprogressreports.aspx
- 80 The Education Act of Saint Lucia was amended to accommodate this development.
- 81 See also: section 4.40 National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality, Australia.
- 82 See: www.federalinternationalrelations.gov.au/content/national_partnership_agreements/education/smarter_schools/literacy_numeracy/national_partnership.pdf.

83 See: www.naplan.edu.au

84 See: www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/national_partnership_agreements/education/smarter_schools/Low_SES_communities/national_partnership.pdf.

85 Absenteeism rate was introduced as an indicator in 2007.

86 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offers technical support; the private sector provides additional assistance; the Ministry has a team of parent mediators for parental empowerment and community mobilisation and the ZEP Unit networks with other agencies and ministries to help pupils and families who are in need.

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