



Foreword

When the Commonwealth Consortium for Education (CCfE) was debating whether to reissue this collection of review essays on Commonwealth co-operation in education, we could not then imagine how important it would become to reach out once again, as in 2009, to a wide audience with a reminder of the extent and value of these collaborative efforts.

In the Foreword to the 2009 forerunner to the current volume, I wrote:

“Education lies at the heart both of Commonwealth relationships and of Commonwealth achievement. There has not, however, always been adequate recognition of the extent of collaboration and of what has been accomplished. In part this may reflect the difficulty of getting a holistic picture: reflecting the fact that co-operation in education takes such a wide variety of forms, and exchanges occur through so many different programmes and institutional channels. This lack of awareness can be dangerous, as when, at the start of this decade, the Commonwealth’s High-Level Group on the future of the Commonwealth overlooked the role of education as one of the principal foundations on which the Commonwealth association rests and a key to its future development. For a time it even seemed as if promotion of educational co-operation might disappear from the functions undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat.”

It is astonishing that the very same threat should re-emerge at the end of a decade in which Commonwealth Heads of Government have reiterated so many times at successive CHOGMs that education is a top priority for Commonwealth member states. It is a decade in which the Commonwealth of Learning has consolidated its place as a major player in international educational co-operation; the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol and Endowment Fund for the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan have been launched; and our own Consortium has matured and made its mark. It has ended with publication of a report from the Eminent Persons Group entitled *A Commonwealth of the People*, a title inspiring

the hope that our association was about to place human development at its centre.

What is so disappointing about the latest proposal that the Secretariat should disengage from education is that it has been made without serious consultation or review of Commonwealth capacity and roles in education for which we have consistently called. The initial discussion papers have been devoid of the analysis and evidence that should underpin such a far-reaching proposal. The Consortium earnestly hopes that Education Ministers at 18CCEM in Mauritius will insist on the need for proper reflection before any irreversible decision or precipitate action is taken. We hope the evidence in these pages and in our companion Commonwealth Education Directory will remind them of the great comparative advantage that the depth and breadth of Commonwealth infrastructure in education brings. Sir Shridath Ramphal hardly exaggerated in describing this as “the Jewel in the Commonwealth Crown”.

I would like to thank all the organisations and individual authors who have helped to bring this publication to fruition in an extraordinarily short time. I am particularly gratified that Michael Crossley and Dame Pearllette Louisy have enabled us to add a Chapter on educational co-operation in small states of the Commonwealth. This is both because Ministers will be meeting for 18CCEM in Mauritius, the island state where the Secretariat began its influential work on Education in Small states 27 years ago; and because this area as much as any other bears testimony to the importance of the Secretariat’s role in developing new insights and pioneering programmes to address issues of central concern to its member states.

We also acknowledge our debt to the Commonwealth Foundation for its financial backing and to Peter Williams our Secretary for again acting as editor, very ably assisted by James Urwick.

Colin Power
Chair, Commonwealth Consortium
for Education

August 2012



Chapter 1: COMMONWEALTH CO-OPERATION IN EDUCATION: A PROFILE

Peter Williams

Introduction

Language, law and learning, it is often said, are the three main pillars underpinning the Commonwealth association. The third of them, education, is an area where collaboration is especially well developed on a scale that has earned educational co-operation the accolade of “Jewel in the Commonwealth Crown”.¹

In part, the prominence of Learning in Commonwealth interchange reflects the inter-relationship between the three pillars. For the commonalities in English-language use, and in the legal/institutional frameworks that are derived from shared history and traditions, provide sound bases for exchanges in education. Collaboration in education takes many different forms. It extends across the spectrum of multilateral co-operation, shared regional institutions in some parts of the world, bilateral co-operation between individual governments, activities of Commonwealth civil-society associations and professional bodies in education, a host of unregulated movements of individual students and teachers going to learn and teach in a Commonwealth country abroad, and commercial transactions in educational goods and services.

This introductory chapter attempts to provide an overview, charting the main elements in education co-operation in the Commonwealth. Given that the question has recently been raised whether the Commonwealth Secretariat should divest itself of its education functions, and out-source the co-ordination of Commonwealth co-operation in education to others, it becomes more relevant than ever to understand the range and depth of the overall resource, and the capacities of the other major players who might be called on to undertake new responsibilities.

The modern Commonwealth is generally considered to date from 1949 when it was agreed that the republican status of newly independent India and Pakistan should not be barriers to Commonwealth membership. Today's Commonwealth comprises 53 states that vary widely in physical and population size, and which are diverse in ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic make-up. Almost all (Mozambique and Rwanda are exceptions) have had a historic connection with Britain as former dependencies

or protectorates. Appendix 2 shows the present members by date of joining the Commonwealth as independent states.

The Commonwealth Secretariat was founded in 1965. The five Commonwealth Secretaries-General to date have been Arnold Smith (1965-75), Shridath Ramphal (1975-90), Emeka Anyaoku (1990-2000), Don McKinnon (2000-2008) and Kamalesh Sharma (since 2008).

Starting in 1966, meetings of Commonwealth prime ministers, and later Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs), have taken place regularly, normally every two years. These lay down Commonwealth policies and priorities. Landmark statements setting out fundamental principles came from Singapore in 1971, and Zimbabwe (the Harare Declaration) in 1991. Following the CHOGM held in Perth (Australia) in 2011, consideration is being given to enshrining some of these principles and values in a “Commonwealth Charter”.

From time to time governments have called for a review of the Commonwealth's priorities and purposes. For example in 2001 a High-Level Group made recommendations to the Brisbane-Coolumb CHOGM, and in 2010 an Eminent Persons Group was formed under the chairmanship of a former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Abdullah Badawi, and submitted its report, “A Commonwealth of the People”, to the Perth CHOGM in 2011. It was this last report, with its call (Recommendation 62) for the Secretary-General to advise governments on areas of work that could be retired, that has opened up the debate as to whether the Secretariat should retain an educational function. According to the EPG, grounds for retirement would be that there is no specific Commonwealth advantage, that Commonwealth resources are too insignificant relative to those of other organisations, or that the work overall has demonstrated no significant impact.

In education, the year 1959 is normally regarded as the start of the modern era of co-operation, because that is when the first Commonwealth Education Conference took place and the decision was taken to launch the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and to set up a central secretariat to facilitate liaison in the education sector between member countries.

¹ S. Ramphal, “Education: Jewel in the Commonwealth Crown”, *The Round Table* 98, no. 405 (2009): 663–678.



One should note, however, that parts of today's infrastructure have much earlier origins. For example the Association of Commonwealth Universities was founded in 1913, and the Commonwealth Institute (forerunner of the Commonwealth Education Trust) in 1886. The first of a series of Imperial Education Conferences was held in 1911.

The multilateral framework in education

(I) The political level

Heads of Government lay down Commonwealth priorities and these at present highlight democracy and good governance and pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs include two education goals – the achievement of universal primary education by 2015 and the attainment of gender parity in school education (see Chapter 5).

In the past ten years Heads have made important statements in relation to education (Box 1.1)

At CHOGMs, Heads of Government have normally dealt with education under the heading of “functional co-operation”. Important education topics with which they have been particularly concerned in recent years have included the education MDGs; co-operation in distance education and the work of the Commonwealth of Learning; Commonwealth student mobility and the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan; Commonwealth studies and education about the Commonwealth; targeted recruitment by Commonwealth industrialised countries of health and education personnel from developing countries; education's role in promoting respect, understanding and social cohesion; and the changing status and role of the former Commonwealth Institute.

At the next level down, ‘functional’ government ministers in the different sectors also meet regularly. Finance and health ministers convene annually, while ministers of education, law, and women's affairs customarily hold conferences every three years. These ministerial gatherings discuss international issues of concern to member states, review progress and institutional arrangements for co-operation in their sector,

Box 1.1 Heads of Government Statements on Education

Abuja, Aso Rock Declaration, 2003

“Education, whether formal or informal, is central to development in any society and is of the highest priority to the Commonwealth. In an increasingly divided and insecure world, education must play a crucial role for people, both young and old, for them to optimise their opportunities and to bridge divides.”

Valletta Communiqué, 2005

Heads “affirmed the centrality of education to development and democracy, as it provides the foundation for realising broader Commonwealth political, economic and social objectives. They ... encouraged all governments to allocate the resources necessary to meet the education MDGs”

Kampala Communiqué, 2007

Heads “reaffirmed the fundamental role played by education in facilitating social and economic transformation”

Port of Spain Communiqué, 2009

Heads acknowledged “that education provides a fundamental tool for self-improvement and national development, and is a basic human right. They stressed the need to embrace an integrated and holistic vision of education systems.... they acknowledged the vital role that education can play in conflict prevention and resolution, and requested the Secretariat to explore options to strengthen its education work programme on Respect and Understanding”.

Perth Communiqué, 2011

Heads “agreed to promote inclusive education and to accelerate efforts to achieve quality universal primary education, in line with the MDGs and Education For All goals”.

and set priorities and approve work plans for the Commonwealth Secretariat – subject always to confirmation by Heads of Government.

Commonwealth Ministers of Education will have met 18 times following their scheduled Conference in Mauritius, (18CCEM) in August 2012. Chapter 2 is devoted to an extended analysis of the structure and content of these conferences.

(2) The Commonwealth Secretariat

The Secretariat, based at Marlborough House in London, provides administrative support to government ministers, services their conferences and implements their decisions. A Social Transformation Programmes Division (STPD) contains sections for gender, health and education. The STPD Director reports to the Deputy Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. The Education Section has six professional staff including a Head of Section. The Secretariat's role is defined as that of advocate, broker and catalyst. The principal focus of the work of the Education Section in recent years has been on basic education, where – as discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this volume – there are serious gaps in Commonwealth member countries' provision.

The Education Section has concentrated its work on the six Action Areas defined at 15CCEM: achieving universal primary education; eliminating gender disparities; improving quality; using distance learning to overcome barriers; supporting education in difficult circumstances; and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in education. Until about 15 years ago a much more holistic approach to educational development was pursued. The team provided the administrative base for establishment of the Commonwealth of Learning and included a higher education unit which helped to pioneer the Commonwealth Higher Support Scheme, the Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service, and the Commonwealth Universities Study Abroad Consortium.

The Secretariat has very limited programme money. The annual budget of the Education Section, excluding staff salaries, is roughly £0.5 million p.a., drawn in the main from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (see below), though significant additional resources are mobilised through partnership arrangements with other agencies.

(3) Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC)

CFTC, founded in 1971, is the Commonwealth's main assistance instrument. It is financed by voluntary contributions from member

countries and has an annual budget of a little over £30 million. It works mainly on the basis of south-south co-operation, supplying experts, training and advisory services. Education in member countries, and notably the regional education institutions that serve small states in the Caribbean and Pacific, has been prominent among beneficiaries.

(4) Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

COL was founded in 1988 and is based in Vancouver, Canada. Its focus is open and distance learning. It is the only one of the three main inter-governmental Commonwealth organisations located outside Britain and is the world's only inter-governmental organisation solely concerned with promoting open and distance learning (ODL).

The role of COL and the Commonwealth's work in ODL is more fully analysed in Chapter 4.

(5) Commonwealth Foundation

The Foundation, like the Secretariat based in Marlborough House in London, was created in 1965 to promote co-operation between, and involvement in Commonwealth activities by, civil society organisations. In pursuit of this mandate the Foundation has until now given regular core-budget and project/activities support to a number of pan-Commonwealth professional associations working in the field of education. In 2012 a major review of its role and functions was being undertaken which was expected to lead to a re-launch in November 2012. At times in the past the Foundation has itself run sectoral programmes of activity, which have included education of women and girls.

The Foundation organises and manages the People's Forums that precede CHOGMs, and at 17CCEM and 18CCEM it has taken responsibility for organising the Stakeholders Forums (see Chapter 2). In this role the Foundation also oversees the drafting and presentation of the Civil Society statements that are presented to Heads of Government at CHOGMs and to Education Ministers at CCEMs.

(6) Commonwealth Education Trust

This began as the Commonwealth Institute, which operated under a pan-Commonwealth governing board and concentrated its activity on education about the Commonwealth. This is an area for which there is now no Commonwealth agency with prime responsibility (see Chapter 14). In 2004, the Institute decided to switch its focus to the development of primary and secondary education in Commonwealth countries, to be promoted through a Centre for Commonwealth Education in Cambridge; and to reconstitute itself as the Commonwealth Education Trust, the bulk of whose resources have been derived from the sale of the lease of the property containing the Commonwealth Institute building.

(7) Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan

Launched at Oxford in 1959, the CSFP in the main operates bilaterally within a multilateral framework, following guidelines established at the first Commonwealth Education Conference. Very recently, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Plan in 2009, a small multilaterally-operated Endowment Fund was created to support a modest additional number of awards tenable at developing country institutions. In the first three-year period some £6m was raised.

Individual governments collectively invest around £30 million p.a. in the main, bilaterally-operated programme, which is described and discussed more fully in Chapter 3. Thus CSFP is rivalled in scale among Commonwealth development programmes only by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

(8) Commonwealth Universities Study Abroad Consortium

Since its formation in 1993, CUSAC has provided a framework for member universities throughout the Commonwealth to provide study-abroad opportunities on a reciprocal basis. There are currently about fifty members drawn from all areas of the Commonwealth. Meetings are held every two years. Most, but not all, CUSAC activities are based at undergraduate level. The programme is run from the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

(9) Regional co-operation in education

The Commonwealth's membership of 53 countries includes 30 'small states' with populations of two and a half million or less (see Table 11.1) and several small dependencies. Given the presence of geographical clusters, the sharing of expensive facilities makes sound sense. The University of the West Indies and the University of the South Pacific are regional institutions which many states support. Chapter 11 discusses educational co-operation in the small states of the Commonwealth.

At other levels of education there are shared examination arrangements, not only among small states in the Caribbean and South Pacific, but also through the West African Examinations Council among the Commonwealth countries of West Africa and Liberia.

In addition, extensive Commonwealth consultation and co-operation in education takes place at regional level through the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Pacific Commission and South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), in all of which Commonwealth states form the great majority.

Commonwealth bilateral aid for education

Important as the multilateral infrastructure is, it is completely dwarfed in scale by bilateral assistance through such bodies as the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Canada's CIDA or Australia's AusAID. In 2007 and 2008 combined, these three industrialised countries and New Zealand together disbursed \$US2.6 billion in aid to education two thirds of which (\$1.7 billion) was for basic education.²

As well as industrialised Commonwealth members, many newly emerging countries like India, Nigeria, Malaysia, Pakistan and South Africa have their own technical co-operation programmes, a phenomenon that the Commonwealth Secretariat appears to have been slow to recognise.

² UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011. *The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), aid tables, 350.

Independent voluntary and professional bodies

A characteristic of Commonwealth infrastructure, particularly in education, is the proliferation of non-government bodies many of them specifically pan-Commonwealth in character, as is discussed more fully in Chapter 13. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), with 500 member institutions throughout the Commonwealth, is prominent among them. ACU helps members to orchestrate their views and to exchange experience of best practice, and provides them with advisory, information and recruitment services. It also administers the CSFP Endowment Fund, the Commonwealth Universities Study Abroad Consortium and for many years housed the highly regarded Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service. Under contract with the UK's DFID it provides the Secretariat for the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK (CSCUK). Organisation of the forums for higher education leaders at 17CCEM and 18CCEM has been ACU's responsibility.

A Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG), enabling representative teachers' bodies across the Commonwealth to participate more actively in Commonwealth education interchange, was launched at the Teachers Forum in Cape Town in 2006. CTG has been the Convenor of Teachers' Forums at 17CCEM and 18CCEM.

In 2001 several Commonwealth voluntary and professional organisations created the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, the body that has commissioned and published this document. Through this grouping, its members, presently numbering 18 (see Appendix 1) concert their efforts on behalf of Commonwealth education development, co-ordinate their approach, and build a more effective constituency for partnering official Commonwealth multilateral and bilateral agencies.

Many of the world's civil-society organisations, both international and national, that contribute strongly to education development, are Commonwealth-based. They include well-known names like AVI (Australian Volunteers International); CBIE (Canadian Bureau for

International Education), CODE (Canadian Organization for Development through Education), CUSO International in Canada; or VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas), ActionAid, OXFAM, and Save the Children in the UK to name but a few of the larger ones. The last three named UK bodies jointly managed the Commonwealth Education Fund established by the British Government in 2002 to support civil-society coalitions to promote Education for All in 17 Commonwealth developing countries, over the period 2002-2008. Faith groups of a wide range of religions and denominations are also prominent among active international and national agencies supporting work in education and health in Commonwealth countries, and sponsoring international links between schools and other community organisations.

In developing countries at national level countless voluntary bodies work for education development, and have fine records to share. Some, like the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) or the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JAMAL), have achieved international fame and attracted aid-agency support. There are thousands of smaller ones that work on a mainly local basis.

Informal individual and institutional exchanges

Much Commonwealth interchange in education is informal and unmanaged. Recorded intra-Commonwealth flows of students are substantial, about 120,000 in 2006, despite the 'marketisation' of higher education and charging by richer countries of full-cost fees to international students, which can impede access for poor students and those from poor countries. This recorded intra-Commonwealth student mobility represents a little under 6 per cent of the world total, compared with about 8 per cent in the year 2000. Commonwealth student interchange with non-Commonwealth countries, notably the United States, accounts for a further 12 per cent of total international student mobility.

There has traditionally been considerable movement of individual teachers between Commonwealth countries, to the benefit of both individual teachers and the institutions to which



they have moved. A recent ministerial concern, however, has been targeted teacher recruitment by employing bodies and recruitment agencies based in some more affluent Commonwealth countries, threatening to deplete cadres of specialised teachers in some developing countries. At Stoke Rochford in 2004, Ministers agreed a Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol to introduce an element of voluntary regulation to such targeted recruitment, to limit its potentially harmful effects for vulnerable systems. The operation of the Protocol has recently (2009) been reviewed.

Another area where exchanges have rapidly multiplied is school linking and institutional partnerships across national boundaries. As well as promoting Commonwealth friendship and understanding, they can serve important educational and developmental objectives. The potential of school and college links in the Commonwealth was the theme of a major civil-society conference in Cape Town at the time of I6CCEM, when Ministers committed themselves to the promotion of such links (see Chapter 12).

Commercial activity in educational goods and services

Supply of education-related goods such as laboratory equipment and workshop machinery, computers for classroom and school-office use, is a growing component of international trade. Commonwealth publishers of books, materials and educational software are particularly well-positioned in international markets because of the widespread use of English. Provision of education services like consultancy, examinations and qualifications, recruitment of teachers, or provision of study and training opportunities has been another strong growth area.

As discussed in Chapter 10, the establishment of off-shore campuses in other countries, the delivery of courses using new technologies to students abroad, and the emerging phenomenon of private companies seeking to invest in schools and colleges in other countries, is introducing a new and potentially controversial dimension to the globalisation of education. This constitutes a potentially important area for future Commonwealth engagement, working with UNESCO and others to develop and secure

adherence to protocols laying down equitable good practice in the international arena.

Chapter 2: CONFERENCES OF COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION MINISTERS

Peter Williams

The Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Mauritius, August 29-31 2012 is the eighteenth in a series that began in Oxford in 1959. This chapter explains the function and format of the Conferences and draws attention to issues that Ministers need to address in making Commonwealth education co-operation more effective.

The Commonwealth family has expanded to its present size of 53 members and now spans every continent. The very growth of the association is one of the factors responsible for changes in the functioning of the Education Ministers' Conferences. The possible 53 delegations in Mauritius are bound to interact in a different manner from what was feasible when there were just 15 or 20 member states in the mid-1960s.

From professional to ministerial conferences 1959-2012

In education the tradition has been to hold Ministerial Conferences every three years. The first Commonwealth Education Conference was held in Oxford in 1959; the latest 18th Conference is being held in the Indian Ocean Republic of Mauritius. In the interval the conferences have moved round the Commonwealth: five in Africa, four in Asia, two in Canada, two in the Caribbean, two (post-Oxford) in Europe, one in Australia (Box 2.1). Britain and Canada have each hosted two in the series.

As can be inferred from Box 2.1, some major changes were made between the eighth and ninth conferences. The earlier Commonwealth Education Conferences (CECs) had been more in the nature of professional gatherings than inter-governmental encounters – in fact hardly any Ministers were present at the first CEC in Oxford. It was the custom up to the eighth CEC for officials and senior professionals to have a week-long review of the Conference business and themes before Ministers joined them in the following week, which accounts for the extended period of the Conferences. From the Ninth Conference in 1984 the events were restyled “Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers” (CCEMs). They were shortened to three or four days, emphasised policy issues and inter-governmental consultation, and involved

Box 2.1: Venues and Dates of the CECs and CCEMs

1.	CEC	Oxford, UK	15-28/07/1959
2.	CEC	New Delhi, India	11-25/01/1962
3.	CEC	Ottawa, Canada	21/08-04/09/1964
4.	CEC	Lagos, Nigeria	26/02-09/03/1968
5.	CEC	Canberra, Australia	3-17/02/1971
6.	CEC	Kingston, Jamaica	10-22/06/1974
7.	CEC	Accra, Ghana	9-18/03/1977
8.	CEC	Colombo, Sri Lanka	5-13/08/1980
9.	CCEM	Nicosia, Cyprus	23-26/07/1984
10.	CCEM	Nairobi, Kenya	20-24/07/1987
11.	CCEM	Bridgetown, Barbados	29/10-02/11/1990
12.	CCEM	Islamabad, Pakistan	27/11-01/12/1994
13.	CCEM	Gaborone, Botswana	28/07-01/08/1997
14.	CCEM	Halifax, Canada	26-30/11/2000
15.	CCEM	Edinburgh, UK	27-30/10/2003
16.	CCEM	Cape Town, South Africa	11-14/12/2006
17.	CCEM	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	16-18/06/2009
18.	CCEM	Mauritius	29-31/08/2012

fewer non-government participants (i.e. those who were not ministers or officials).

The principal thrust at the first, Oxford, Commonwealth Education Conference in 1959 was the launch of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) and the creation of a small secretariat, the Commonwealth Education Liaison Unit (CELU), based in Marlborough House, to implement the decisions of the Conference. The second (New Delhi) and Third (Ottawa) Conferences were organised by the CELU, but by the time the fourth was held in Lagos the Commonwealth Secretariat had been created. The first decade of Commonwealth education co-operation saw strong enthusiasm to develop new schemes and programmes of collaboration, some multilateral and others bilateral. They included, for example, a series of Commonwealth Specialist Education Conferences and a Commonwealth Bursaries Scheme to strengthen teacher education.

From 1974 onwards the Conferences adopted a principal theme for analysis and exchange of experience, the discussion often being

introduced by invited keynote speakers. This main discussion topic was additional to the ongoing business of reviewing and improving the mechanisms of co-operation, or identifying new opportunities for working together. The principal themes of the twelve Conferences since 1974 are shown in Box 2.2. Conference themes tended to reflect the main contemporary global issues and debates in educational development, such as better resource management, economics and financing of education, the linkage between education the curriculum and the job market, quality and access, the role of the state.

Box 2.2: Themes of Education Ministers' Conferences 1974 to 2012

1974	6CEC	Management of education
1977	7CEC	Economics of education
1980	8CEC	Human resource development
1984	9CCEM	(a) Resources for education and their cost effective use (b) Education and Youth Unemployment
1987	10CCEM	Vocational orientation of education
1990	11CCEM	Improving the quality of basic education
1994	12CCEM	Changing role of the state in education
1997	13CCEM	Education and technology
2000	14CCEM	Education in a global era: challenges of equity, opportunities for diversity
2003	15CCEM	Access inclusion and achievement: closing the gap
2006	16CCEM	Access to quality education: for the good of all
2009	17CCEM	Education in the Commonwealth: towards and beyond global goals and targets
2012	18CCEM	Education in the Commonwealth: closing the gap as we accelerate towards achieving Internationally Agreed Goals

Some of the sharpest exchanges of the 1980s did not concern these issues, but rather the mobility of students in the Commonwealth. The decision of some of the industrialised countries to withdraw subsidies at tertiary level from students from abroad, while retaining them for home students, meant that tuition fees for international students rose sharply. The seven

successive reports of the Commonwealth Standing Committee on Student Mobility were vigorously, and at times acrimoniously, debated by Ministers.

Planning and organisation of the Conferences

The venue of the next CCEM is normally agreed at the preceding Conference in response to an invitation by one of the participating Ministers. Precise dates are then fixed by consultation, normally falling in a period 32 to 40 months (roughly three years) after the Conference before. Customarily the mechanism for securing formal approval of dates, agenda and list of invited observers for CCEMs was the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee, composed of representatives of all member countries through their high commissions in London, meeting with the Secretariat. But this formal machinery fell into abeyance around the turn of the Millennium and consultation between the Secretariat and high commissions is now through more ad hoc arrangements.

Once a theme has been agreed by member countries through consultation, the Secretariat has normally taken main executive responsibility for the agenda and documentation, while the degree of engagement by the host country depends on its wishes and capacity to be extensively involved. In the past, member countries were asked to submit a paper outlining their perspective on the main theme, and the Secretariat then commissioned a pan-Commonwealth overview of these reports for Conference use; but since 15CCEM the expectation that every country will submit a paper has been waived.

The role of the host is to plan the Conference in conjunction with the Secretariat, to chair the Conference sessions, and to provide the venue and much of the logistical support. The host country provides other hospitality to delegates – lunches, dinners, receptions – from its own resources. Delegations' own financial responsibility includes travel to the Conference, and living costs for delegation members. All these arrangements are spelled out in an administrative aide-mémoire circulated to all delegates.

The Conference in session

Typically 40 or more delegations have attended CCEMs, most led by Ministers. Some contain more than one member of ministerial rank, especially in countries with multi-jurisdictional responsibility for education, as in federal systems. UK dependencies are invited to be present as part of the British delegation. Delegations vary in size from one or two to a dozen, but the host-country delegation has often numbered 20 or 30. Commonly there will be 150-180 country delegates present, and a further 20 or 30 members of invited observer delegations, including international agencies and Commonwealth voluntary and professional bodies with education functions (see Box 2.3).

Box 2.3: Observer Delegations at CCEMs

The 40-50 bodies typically invited to observe at the Conferences fall into four main groups:

- a) Commonwealth civil society organisations/ associations in the education sector
- b) Intergovernmental organisation
- c) Bilateral and other development agencies
- d) Other relevant organisations, including host country ones

Quite commonly only half this number take up the invitation.

Official observers can attend most Ministerial sessions, participating in working groups and break-out sessions, but not in Ministerial plenaries. They are included in social events.

On the day before the opening of the Conference, senior officials meet to review Conference business including the agenda, timetable, procedural issues and documentation for the Conference and make recommendations to Ministers on selected items.

The ceremonial Conference opening is followed by three days of business sessions in plenary, with occasional break-out into committees or 'round tables'. The Commonwealth's compact size means that ministers can sit round one table, enabling more informal exchanges of a kind denied to UN bodies with 150 or more members. The contemporary value of this once very real advantage, when the Commonwealth had less than 30 members, should not however be exaggerated: there is still a problem of

Ministers "queuing" to make their interventions. Proceedings are presided over by the host Minister, formally elected to the Chair. Long prepared speeches are strongly discouraged. A record is taken by Commonwealth and host-country officials, jointly acting as the secretariat for the Conference.

The business of the conferences has traditionally been of three main kinds. First, a day or more, early in the Conference, is devoted to the main theme in plenary and working group sessions, with invited plenary speakers introducing the subject. The character of this part of proceedings is exchange of experience by countries and identification of common issues and interesting innovations. Conclusions and recommendations are distilled from discussion for report and follow-up action.

A second major segment of business is concerned with Commonwealth co-operation in education and the common institutional infrastructure. The activities of the Commonwealth of Learning, the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and of the Education Section of the Secretariat are all reviewed, sometimes with the help of Conference working parties. Progress is noted, mandates and new directions are agreed and new pledges may be invited or made for COL and CSFP. Accounts may be given of progress on new joint initiatives like the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol or the Virtual University for Small States.

Thirdly, close attention is given to the Conference Communiqué, incorporating the conclusions of the Conference and Ministers' decisions concerning future action. At 14CCEM in Halifax, Ministers had the additional challenge of agreeing on a Halifax Statement, "Education: our Common Future". Every Conference up to and including the Twelfth was followed by a report prepared by the Secretariat. For 13CCEM and 14CCEM this useful practice, which helps to ensure proper accountability and follow-up, fell victim to Secretariat economies. But Conference reports were reintroduced after 15CCEM and the practice was repeated at 16CCEM and 17CCEM.

Conference business has undergone elaboration through introduction of recent innovations.



The press was admitted to the proceedings for the first time at 14CCEM, and from 13CCEM onwards the overall programme has included 'parallel events'. At Gaborone in 1997 a 'Parallel Symposium', providing for civil society involvement and discussion of the issues before Ministers, was introduced, a feature repeated in 2000 and 2003. In Cape Town (2006), Kuala Lumpur (2009) and Mauritius (2012), this event has been designated a 'Stakeholders Forum'. At 15CCEM a 'Youth Summit' (now Youth Forum) was added, and in Cape Town a Teachers Forum. A fourth Forum for higher education leaders was introduced at 17CCEM in Kuala Lumpur. Conference agendas take account of these parallel events, enabling Ministers to interact with the Forums and to hear their conclusions, before framing their own.

At every Conference since 13CCEM in Botswana in 1997, there has also been an exhibition or, as in Edinburgh, a 'Showcase of Best Practice', normally in the same venue as the Ministers' Conference.

These various events, which allow interfacing of civil-society participants with Ministers and delegations, extend the range of interactions in a welcome way. But they also add considerable complexity to Conference schedules, require much more meeting space and pose the danger that playing host to the Conferences may prove too daunting a prospect for smaller or less affluent Commonwealth member states.

Charting the future of CCEMs: some challenges

The efficacy of the Commonwealth as a forum to address issues affecting the global common interest is well recognised. Commonwealth Conferences have particular attractions for participants because of their informality, mutual respect and equality of members, a sense of common purpose, and direct exchange of views. This contrasts with the greater formality, set speeches, and the effect of listening to simultaneous translation at many world gatherings. Moreover the extensive intergovernmental infrastructure of institutions and activities in education requires guidance from political leaders representing their countries and peoples, the beneficiaries of co-operative activity.

The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group that reported in 2011 singled out Education and Law as areas where Commonwealth ministerial meetings should continue in future, and their recommendation was formally accepted by Heads of Government in Perth in October 2011. The Conferences therefore seem destined to be a continuing feature of the Commonwealth scene in the foreseeable future, even though the capacity to organise and service them would be very much impaired if the Secretariat severely cut back on its own educational role.

If, however, the Conferences are to justify fully the expense of time and money needed to bring together up to 200 political leaders and professionals in education for a week, and the months of preparation required, they must ever adjust to new challenges so that they can operate more effectively.

A first criterion is surely that more imagination is used in selecting the Conference themes. In recent years there has been a certain dull repetitiveness in the choice of topics, with five successive Conferences focused on basic education and the quest of Education for All. This challenge is indeed a proper matter of real concern to the Commonwealth community given that so much of the global deficit in terms of basic level enrolment and gender inequality is located in member countries. But it is questionable whether it should be so constantly and exclusively revisited, especially taking account of the fact that the great majority of Commonwealth countries have achieved the two education Millennium Goals, and have other pressing preoccupations at secondary and post-secondary levels that the Conferences could usefully address. It is time to move on as seemed to be promised, but not actually realised, at 17CCEM.

A certain timidity has prevailed in recent years. There has been an apparent unwillingness to tackle controversial issues arising from the globalisation of education. The 'world education order', as it actually operates reflects inequalities of power and influence whose consequences need to be addressed. The opening up of 'markets' in educational services poses difficult challenges for developing countries that wish to strengthen and develop indigenous languages and culture. Control by large multi-national corporations over access to knowledge can

be operated on the one hand to promote, or conversely to impede, access to knowledge by the poorest. The Commonwealth could give a lead in developing frameworks and protocols that would promote a fairer sharing of benefits and costs involved in international education relations.

There are other controversial subjects like brain drain and the poaching of talent, conditionality in education assistance, and where the boundaries of free trade and regulation of international trade in education services should lie. These subjects would spark much livelier debates than those in which the Ministers have engaged of late.

Among other suggestions that have previously been made for reform, one is for somewhat less frequent CCEMs, perhaps on a four-year cycle. However, a four-year cycle would require careful dovetailing of CCEMs with the cycle of CHOGMs and UNESCO General Conferences. These presently take place biennially, both in the last quarter of the same year and frequently clashing with each other.

Moreover the workability of any schedule involving longer intervals between conferences would depend on ensuring greater continuity between CCEMs. Already, with the current three-year interval, the democratic political process results in a comparatively small proportion of ministers surviving from one Conference to the next. In consequence each new Conference involves a steep learning curve for the majority of ministers and other participants, who only become fully conversant with the issues at the end of three days when it is time to depart and go home.

Some proposals

The Commonwealth Consortium for Education has repeatedly proposed to Ministers that greater continuity might be provided by establishing a small representative group of four to six ministers to monitor implementation between conferences and to assist the Secretariat's education staff in carrying out ministerial mandates. An informed, committed, group of Ministers could provide leadership and impart greater substance to CCEM deliberations. That would seem to be a more effective and less expensive approach than the holding of mid-term

Regional Conferences in different parts of the Commonwealth, as experimentally tried in 2005 between 15CCEM and 16CCEM.

The Consortium's proposal would be one way to help ensure that Conferences confined their decisions and recommendations to what can realistically be implemented. There has been a tendency at past CCEMs to go in for long and imprecise "wish lists" without specifying the scale and provenance of resources and the locus of responsibility for implementation. This has made it difficult to evaluate progress between conferences.

The Consortium has also proposed in memoranda to Ministers that there could be an agreed framework of Commonwealth co-operative activity in education, centrally co-ordinated but mobilising the efforts of both official and non-official agencies, to advance work on priority areas identified by Ministers. The scope for developing an agreed Commonwealth Plan of Action in Education, advanced in a Consortium's 2005 Report to the Secretariat on the way ahead for the Commonwealth in relation to the six education Action Areas identified in Edinburgh, could usefully be resurrected. Whether or not Governments heed appeals to retain promotion of educational co-operation as a Commonwealth function, it is clear that partnership among all the agencies engaged in this enterprise is going to be the way of the future.

Chapter 3: COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP PLAN

John Kirkland

Introduction

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) has proved to be one of the most enduring and successful forms of Commonwealth collaboration. Almost 30,000 individuals have benefited from awards. Scholars have come from every Commonwealth country, whilst awards have been held in twenty-five countries at some point since the Plan became operational in 1960.

Historically, award offers have been concentrated in richer and more educationally developed Commonwealth countries with the financial and educational resources to host them, most notably the United Kingdom, Canada, India and New Zealand. To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Plan in 2009, Commonwealth Education Ministers embarked on a new initiative, a CSFP Endowment Fund, to extend the location of awards to a wider range of member countries.

A report to I8CCEM in Mauritius shows that the Endowment Fund has been successfully launched, and also that the number of CSFP awards has been further increased, reflecting steady growth over the last decade. It presents evidence from surveys of alumni, current Scholars and applicants confirming the popularity and standing of the Plan. At the same time, it asks Ministers to note that, given the continuing lack of any central organisation for the CSFP, no mechanism exists to encourage governments to participate, or disseminate information among those that do. In these circumstances, a paper from the Association of Commonwealth Universities proposes that the Management Committee established to manage the new CSFP Endowment Fund might evolve into a structure that can support the CSFP as a whole, whilst recognising that leadership in policy and funding will continue to rest with national authorities.

What is the CSFP?

The Plan provides a framework through which governments in Commonwealth countries can offer educational awards to citizens of other member states. It is entirely up to each individual country how many awards it will contribute (if any), and to which countries they will be offered. There is no central administration. In practice the majority of awards are for conventional postgraduate study, but this is not a requirement.

Other forms of award currently offered include undergraduate awards, split-site doctorates, short-term fellowships (typically for mid-career professionals) and scholarships by distance learning. Some of these categories of award are, however, specific to a single donor.

The Plan was established at the first Commonwealth Education Conference at Oxford in 1959. It aimed to provide a practical manifestation of Commonwealth collaboration, by enabling citizens to share the wide range of educational resources and experiences throughout member countries. Five general principles were established to govern the Plan, as follows:

- The CSFP should be distinct and additional to any other schemes;
- The Plan should be based on mutual co-operation and the sharing of educational experience among all Commonwealth countries;
- The nature of awards should be flexible, to take account of changing needs over time;
- The Plan should be Commonwealth-wide, and based on a series of bilateral arrangements between sending and host countries;
- Awards should recognise and promote the highest standards of intellectual achievement.

Historical context

Reports presented to successive Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEMs) have recorded trends in the development of the Plan. Numbers grew rapidly during the first few years of operation, and a revised target of 1,000 individual award-holders at any one time was met in 1967. That year also saw the highest number of countries hosting awards at any one time – 14. Although some developing countries expressed frustration that their offers did not attract the numbers of applicants hoped for, this period saw the establishment of a tradition whereby students from developed Commonwealth countries undertook postgraduate work in developing-country institutions. Growth slowed during the 1970s, as the number of individuals on award each year settled at around 1,000.

However the early part of the next decade saw further expansion, partly as a means of alleviating the effects of the introduction of full-cost tuition fees for postgraduate study in some countries. More Commonwealth Scholarships were included in the 'Pym Package' of support for overseas students in the United Kingdom, whilst Canada also pledged increased support. A new and ambitious target level of 1,500 awards each year was set by Education Ministers at their Cyprus Conference in 1984 (9CCEM), and was achieved in 1986. In 1993 the Plan reached an all-time high in terms of numbers – with 1,704 Scholars and 105 Fellows holding awards. The next six years, however, were a period of rapid decline. This partly reflected the withdrawal of several countries as donors, and partly a lack of confidence globally in the impact of scholarships and higher education as a tool for international development. By the time of 14CCEM in 2000, the numbers of new awards and students on award had slipped back to 450 and 1,021 respectively. Ministers agreed a set of proposals to reverse this trend. They included:

- A revised target for the number of new awards, and a doubling of the number of countries offering them;
- Much stronger analysis of past award-holders' achievements, through tracer studies;
- Increased co-operation between participating countries, through e.g. the establishment of an international website, bringing information about the full range of CSFP opportunities together for the first time.

Reports to Education Ministers at Edinburgh (2003) and Cape Town (2006) showed that these proposals were having some impact. The average number of new awards per year had increased from 412 to 460 by 2003, and subsequently increased to 677 and 886 in 2006 and 2009 respectively. The period was also marked by increases in the number of countries offering awards and evidence of increased diversity in the types of awards on offer.

Current situation

Results of the 2012 survey to be presented at 18CCEM show continued growth and support

for the Plan. Particular features include the following:

- An increase in the average number of new awards taken up per year to 961.
- A slight fall in the average number of Scholars and Fellows on award during the 2009-12 period, from 1,787 to 1,723, suggesting that the increased number of new awards on offer tend to be shorter in duration than in previous periods. The figure of 1,723 is, however, still high in historical terms. The highest-ever total for a single year was 1809 (in 2008). The average figure for 2003-2006, reported at 16CCEM in 2006, was 1,420.
- A total of thirteen countries are known to have instigated new awards during the 2009-2012 period. These were Brunei Darussalam, Canada, India, Kenya*, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Samoa*, South Africa, Tanzania*, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom. (Countries marked with an asterisk received support towards their awards from the new CSFP Endowment Fund.) Two further countries – Botswana and Jamaica – also hosted awards at some point during the triennium – in their cases the award-holders had first taken up their awards prior to 2009.
- A slight abatement in 2009-12 in the trend of increasing concentration on masters-level training, but with a continuing overall strong emphasis on postgraduate training. Masters-level awards still accounted for about 63 per cent of Scholarships, compared with 65 per cent in 2006-09. Doctorates remained a significant part of the provision, accounting for 26 per cent of Scholarships. Scholarships as a whole account for 83 per cent of awards, and mid-career Fellowships for the remaining 17 per cent (up from 15 per cent in 2009).
- A marked increase in the proportion of new awards going to Africa during the past decade. The 2009 report stated that Africa's share had passed the 50 per cent mark for the first time ever, whilst by 2012 it had settled at 55 per cent. This does not appear to be at the expense of South Asia, whose proportion of awards has been a fairly constant 28-30 per cent in recent years. Instead, it marks a decline in the relative proportion awarded to

Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand, the Caribbean and East Asia. The changing percentage shares should, however, be seen in the context of the increasing number of awards overall.

- A general trend in the past decade towards older award-holders. After a slight reversal in the triennium 2006-2009 the trend resumed in the 2009-2012 period, with the proportion of award-holders aged 24 or less declining from 16 per cent to 13 per cent, and those over the age of 40 rising from 19 per cent to 21 per cent, the latter being mainly Fellowship holders.
- Whilst all subjects of study remain eligible for awards, a shift is evident towards topics that relate directly to development objectives. Within this, the past three years have seen increases in the proportions studying science and engineering (28 per cent to 33 per cent). Other main disciplines were social sciences (16 per cent) and health (14 per cent). Only four per cent list their subject of study as being arts.
- The proportion of female Scholars taking up awards remains stubbornly below 50 per cent, averaging 45 per cent in the 2009-2012 period, compared with 44 per cent in the two previous triennia. It is, however, encouraging that the proportion of women selected significantly exceeds the proportion nominated, suggesting that selection panels do take gender into account.
- The United Kingdom remains the largest contributor of awards, although its share of all CSFP awards has slightly fallen from a level of 78 per cent reported in 2009 to 71 per cent in 2009-2012. The number of awards tenable outside the UK has risen rapidly from 195 in 2009 to 295 in 2012. As described below, the CSFP Endowment Fund offers the potential to extend this trend further.
- Overall, the survey of national agencies suggests that interest in the Plan remains high, with several respondents reporting strong impact in their own countries, and calling for the programme to be expanded. Several countries, however, struck a note of caution to the effect that CSFP operates alongside

other international scholarship programmes, so making it particularly important to ensure that the distinctive nature of the CSFP is maintained.

Relevance and diversity

Education Ministers have frequently called for the number of countries offering awards to increase, but after the initial progress of the 1960s this proved hard to achieve. The decision of the 17CCEM in 2009 to establish a new source of funding – the CSFP Endowment Fund – has added significant new impetus to this aim.

By early 2012, the Endowment appeal had generated a fund of almost £6 million, comprising donations from ten Commonwealth governments and almost two hundred others, mostly alumni of the programme. By 2011, the Fund had supported its first four Scholarships – in Kenya, Mauritius, Samoa and Tanzania, and an initial Fellowship in Nigeria. More substantial contributions in early 2012 – including a contribution of \$1 million from Australia – will allow for significant expansion in 2013 and beyond. It is expected that by the end of 2013 the Fund will be able to support at least thirty awards per year. As a result of this, and the continuing support of existing host countries, it is expected that the number of countries acting as hosts each year will rise to over twenty by 2013, a substantial increase on the previous high of fourteen, attained as long ago as 1967. Moreover, the Fund will provide a welcome degree of permanence and central direction to the work of the Plan.

Diversity has characterised the nature of awards on offer, as well as their location. A significant outcome of the 2000 Education Ministers' Conference (14CCEM) was the proposal that donor countries review the type of award offered in future, with a view to increasing diversity and access. Early indications of this were the decision of Canada to offer Scholarships by distance learning to Caribbean countries, and of the UK to support split-site doctorates. In 2002-03, the UK took this process further by introducing mid-career Professional Fellowships, and adopting the idea of distance-learning Scholarships. Since 2006, Canada has increased the range of awards on offer by adding Post-doctoral Fellows and undergraduate exchanges.

These initiatives have now had a significant impact. More UK award-holders study by distance learning than by any other mode, and the majority of these never visit their “host” country as part of their study-course. The Professional Fellowships programme is smaller, but doubled from the initial intake of thirty in 2003 and has been targeted by the UK for further expansion in the current funding round to 2015. Taken together, these innovations have been influential in the increased orientation of the scheme to Africa, and to the rising average age of award-holders referred to above.

The CSFP authorities in the UK are currently reviewing the effectiveness of these initiatives, and it will be some years before final conclusions are reached. The initial indications, however, are positive. The distance-learning Scholarships, which achieved their first graduates in 2005, now have almost 200 masters graduates, and report drop-out rates of less than 10 per cent. This is only slightly higher than for “conventional” masters degrees, although the figure may rise slightly in future. The time taken to obtain the award is longer, but this is partly compensated for by the ability to apply newly acquired skills even before graduation. Professional Fellowships, which have involved a wide range of public, voluntary and private sector organisations as hosts, are thought to provide a direct and cost-effective way of transferring skills, and in some cases they act as a catalyst for new and long-term international partnerships between institutions.

Alumni and long-term impact

In common with many other international scholarship programmes, during the first decades of its operation the CSFP made little attempt to assess the impact of its awards. With the exception of one international survey in the late 1980s, little attempt was made to trace former award-holders; still less to evaluate their contribution or harness the expertise and goodwill generated. Much has changed in recent years. The year 2009 saw the publication of the second *Directory of Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows*, jointly supported by the authorities in Canada and the United Kingdom. This gives career profiles of almost 4,000 alumni, and lists the names of some 26,000. The UK has also embarked on a long-term programme of

evaluation of its contribution, which produced its first reports in 2008. Taken together, these initiatives provide a strong base from which both to measure impact and to promote greater networking between alumni. The ISCCEM in Edinburgh set a target of establishing a database containing at least 5,000 former award-holders; by 2009 the number had extended to some 5,700. The number now approaches 8,000.

Initial analysis of impact can be seen from a 2008 survey, which attracted a response rate of some 40 per cent – or 2,226 individual alumni. The proportion of award-holders returning to work in their home countries is thought to be higher than for overseas students generally; with the recent UK survey finding that 85-90 per cent of recipients were working in their own countries. This ratio may increase further as the introduction of distance-learning and short-term professional awards takes effect. A high proportion works in the public sector, with higher education the largest single occupation. Out of the 2,226 respondents to the UK alumni survey, 90 per cent reported maintaining some form of link with their former host country; 45 per cent claimed in some way to have influenced government thinking in their country, between them citing 2,841 specific examples. Alumni had also gone on to reach very senior levels. Even though the total figure traced to date represents only a minority of the total number, and is heavily biased towards recent alumni who have not yet reached the peak of their careers, examples have already been found of about 50 alumni who have served at cabinet level, 22 as Permanent Secretaries, 20 federal or supreme court judges, 11 ambassadors and no less than 75 university vice-chancellors. Utilisation of this resource presents a significant opportunity for the Commonwealth. In addition to a regular hard-copy magazine, electronic networks are being developed for alumni with common professional interests. The nine “live” ones cover education, public health, governance, environment, agriculture, gender, science and technology, inter-faith understanding, law and human rights.

Evaluation of the scheme is, however, an ongoing activity. The British Department for International Development has encouraged the UK Commonwealth Scholarships Commission (CSCUK) to devote some one per cent of its (increased) budget to this purpose during the

2011-15 funding period. This initiative has already yielded a series of regional and subject-based studies, and a programme of rolling evaluation to ensure the regular updating of the 2008 survey data. The UK Commission is also keen to engage with other international experts on evaluation techniques, recognising the lack of agreed methodology in the field, and to this end it convened an international conference of scholarship agencies in March 2012.

Administration of the CSFP

With the exception of the new Endowment Fund, whose affairs are overseen by a separate Management Committee, there is no central management of the CSFP. Instead, each country appoints its own nominating agency. This is normally, but not always, an arm of government. The agency is responsible, where invited, for nominating candidates to other countries. It is also responsible for issuing the offers of any awards tenable in its own country.

The above process has several advantages. It represents a genuine partnership. The fact that candidates go through two selection processes, one at home and the other in the awarding country, helps ensure quality, and minimises the risk of corruption. The involvement of sending-country governments should ensure that nominations reflect any national priorities. The country that offers the award does not have to bear the costs of advertising.

The system also has drawbacks, however. The process can lack co-ordination, and be difficult for candidates to understand. The complexity of the two-stage selection system might put off states that were thinking of offering a small number of awards. In some countries, it could result in selection procedures that lack transparency, with candidates' applications all being filtered by the authorities.

Overall Plan progress is also difficult to monitor – particularly in the absence of a central agency charged with this task on a regular basis. Longstanding calls for a small central unit – based at the Commonwealth Secretariat or elsewhere – to provide central facilitation, have not yet been acted upon. Attempts to improve co-ordination in recent years have included the reintroduction of occasional meetings between

host countries, to discuss both the general principles of the Plan and operational issues. One such meeting was convened in London in July 2001, and a follow-up was scheduled for Stellenbosch in South Africa, immediately preceding 16CCEM. The final recommendation, for more collaboration over alumni activity, was partly met with the publication of the alumni directory, as a joint undertaking between Canada and the United Kingdom.

Prospects and recommendations

After fifty years, the CSFP remains one of the most popular and well recognised programmes to bear the Commonwealth name. Evidence suggests that this support and recognition remains as strong as ever, amongst member governments, award-holders, alumni and even unsuccessful applicants. The new Endowment Fund, successfully expanded after its launch at 17 CCEM, now offers a route to diversify CSFP activities even further.

The main activity of the Fund remains at national level – a system that was the intention of the founders and that has worked well. However the lack of any central administration and co-ordination may prevent the Plan from fulfilling its potential. There is evidence, for example, that award holders and alumni would engage much more with the Commonwealth if they were asked to do so; that more governments could be persuaded to offer awards if any system existed for encouraging this; and that the Plan could become more coherent if any system existed for exchange of views between national agencies.

The progress report on CSFP presented to 18CCEM notes that, following the establishment of a Committee to manage the new Endowment Fund, a mechanism now exists for central activity. It proposes that this role be extended to provide an overview of the Plan as a whole, whilst maintaining the key role of national agencies in implementation. Finally, the paper recommends that Ministers further build on the success of the Plan in recent years by calling for governments to increase the number of awards available.

Chapter 4: WORKING TOGETHER IN DISTANCE LEARNING

Commonwealth of Learning

A precondition for human, social or economic development is an education and training system accessible to all—as recognised by the United Nations' eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the six Education for All (EFA, Dakar) targets.

The basic development agenda of improving health and reducing poverty and hunger calls for learning on a massive scale, with the focus on improving livelihoods and fostering a healthy population. Recruiting and training teachers is a major obstacle to the achievement of the vital “universal primary education” MDG: Sub-Saharan Africa alone still needs to raise its current stock of teachers, 2.9 million, by more than two-thirds to five million by 2015 to reach that goal. These estimates in proportional terms are little different from those of 2006, when it was reckoned that the stock then of 2.4 million teachers would need to reach 4 million by 2015.¹

Open and distance learning (ODL) can help enable people to learn or train at the location, time and pace of their choice, for less money and, in some circumstances, with improved results. Over the past decades, governments and learning institutions have recognised that the financial resources available for conventional schooling cannot increase commensurately with population growth, or adequately cope with the need to train human capital through face-to-face education methods alone. Some three million Commonwealth citizens are already engaged in some form of distance learning today and these numbers are rapidly rising.

Historically, the Commonwealth is a pioneer in the development and growth of ODL. In the 1970s and 1980s, large and successful Commonwealth institutions such as the UK Open University, India's Indira Gandhi National Open University, the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Canada's Athabasca University transformed the old-style “correspondence course” into quality education and training systems, using a learner-centred and learner-supported approach to instructional design. These and other Commonwealth institutions utilised information and communications technology (ICT) such as radio, television and recorded media for education and training, and today remain early adopters of the latest

computer and Internet-mediated learning technologies.

Alongside such “single-mode” distance learning institutions, more and more traditional education institutions have been offering distance learning alternatives and technology-enhanced programming, converting to fully-fledged “dual mode” facilities.

Establishment and role of the Commonwealth of Learning

In 1987, Commonwealth Heads of Government received a report entitled, *Towards a Commonwealth of Learning: A proposal to create the University of the Commonwealth for Co-operation in Distance Learning*.² Based on the findings of that report and a subsequent one from a working group chaired by John Daniel, leaders agreed to establish a Commonwealth institution to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies – the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). Their vision was that this agency should be in the vanguard of using ODL and ICT developments to meet the Commonwealth's education and training needs, helping member states optimise their potential and develop their human capital through extending quality education access to remote regions, and to people with limited or no face-to-face learning options.

COL became operational in 1989. From the beginning, it has received a significant overall level of funding, co-operation and support from developing countries. More than two decades since COL's inception, Commonwealth Heads of Government and Ministers of Education recognise that it is in part due to the efforts of COL and a wide international network of partners that distance education is now part of the mainstream of education and training. Today there is at least one distance-learning operation in each of the Commonwealth's member states, including middle and lower-income countries.

While much has been achieved, there is still tremendous need. As defined in the EFA and MDG declarations, education is one of the best development strategies to break the human cycle

¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), Information Sheet No. 6. *The Global Demand for Primary Teachers – 2011 Update* (Montreal: UIS, 2011), <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/IS6-2011-Teachers-EN6.pdf>.

² *Report of the Expert Group on Commonwealth Co-operation in Distance Education and Open Learning, Chaired by Lord Briggs* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat).

of poverty, misery and violence. ODL, coupled with the strategic application of ICT, can play a central role in delivering education at every level to all, and in providing them with the necessary tools for a more productive future.

Hosted by the Government of Canada and headquartered in Vancouver, Canada, COL is the world's only intergovernmental organisation solely concerned with the promotion and development of distance education and open learning. COL helps developing Commonwealth countries increase their access to learning using distance education and appropriate technologies. Its mission and core goals are shown in Box 4.1.

Box 4.1: COL Mission and Goals

Mission Statement

The Commonwealth of Learning helps governments expand the scale efficiency and quality of learning by using appropriate technologies, particularly those that support open and distance learning (ODL).

Strategic Goals:

- Quality education for all Commonwealth citizens
- Human resource development in the Commonwealth
- Harnessing ODL and technologies to achieve development goals

Impact Statement

A substantial and equitable increase in the number of Commonwealth citizens acquiring the knowledge and skills for leading productive and healthy lives, through formal and non-formal open and distance learning opportunities.

Programming

All 53 Commonwealth member countries benefit from COL's work, which addresses the key learning and development challenges associated with the UN's MDG and EFA targets such as gender equity, sustainable development, environmental protection and civil rights; as well as the Commonwealth objectives of peace, democracy, equality and good governance.

COL's greatest impact is in supporting efforts to give the Commonwealth's citizens more access to quality education and training through open, distance and eLearning, thereby enabling them to benefit from improved livelihoods, greater gender equity, and overall economic, social and cultural development.

COL's impact has evolved in two phases. In the 1990s, its main focus was expanding and improving higher education. COL was the catalyst for initiatives such as the establishment of:

- The University of the West Indies Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC),
- A medical education network in Malaysia,
- The Open University of Tanzania,
- A teleconferencing network at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU),
- Restructured extension studies at the University of the South Pacific,
- The Centre for Distance Learning at the University of Mauritius, and
- The Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) in New Delhi.

In 2000 the Millennium Declaration and the World Forum on Education for All set new goals for the expansion of education and training at all levels. In its second decade, COL progressively aligned its programme with this agenda by focusing on the key challenges in formal education while also expanding informal learning opportunities to promote higher incomes and better health. The programme was renamed "Learning for Development".

For development to become sustainable and self-replicating takes time, so COL emphasises continuity of focus with regular adjustments to reflect feedback. This strategy is successful. A decade of refining its know-how has made COL the world's leading source of expertise on open schooling. This is a vital development, because it seems unlikely that multi-national initiatives such as the Global Partnership for Education could ever achieve their goal of getting all children into school without expanding open schooling. Skills development, an increasing preoccupation of governments, already permeates COL's programme and will receive even greater emphasis in the future. Similarly, a decade of action research on Lifelong Learning for Farmers in several countries has yielded a model that empowers poor people to become more prosperous by tapping into their spirit of entrepreneurship.

Since 2000, COL has also become increasingly adept at results-based management. Assertions about COL's impact can now be backed by an expanding corpus of evaluation data.

While often drawing upon the experience and expertise of the Commonwealth's industrialised countries, COL strives to develop South-South co-operation. Its streamlined core staffing allows it to target resources and activities efficiently to the needs of individual countries, using collaborative networking to foster regional co-operation and exchanges. Box 4.2 illustrates the wide scope of COL's work.

COL helps countries develop policies and systems that extend the benefits of education to more of their citizens. It works with institutional and individual partners to give policy advice and to implement programme activities in consultation with governments, and provides best practice examples that demonstrate how ODL can help education opportunities expand more rapidly.

Box 4.2: Examples of COL's Work, 2009-2012

Open Schooling

- Providing support for the establishment of new open schools in Cameroon, Ghana, Kiribati, Nigeria, Pakistan, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Trinidad & Tobago.
- Leading the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA).
- Improving and extending the capacity of the National Teachers Institute (NTI) in Nigeria and the National Institute for Open Schooling (NIOS) in India, and mobilising NIOS as a resource for the development of open schooling systems in other countries. Establishing a national Open School in Trinidad & Tobago.

Technical and Vocational Skills Development

- Helping extend the reach of flexible skills development among technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in Africa, working in many instances with the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA).
- Supporting expansion of TVET in the Pacific through literacy and basic trades programmes.

Advocacy

- Advocating the creation, sharing and use of open educational resources (OER).
- Building capacity in ODL through online and face-to-face workshops about learner support, instructional design, materials development, OER, leadership and research.
- Sponsoring a biennial Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning.

Teacher Education

- Developing ICT capacity among teachers through the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration.
- Introducing UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools approach to pre- and in-service teacher education curricula in 10 countries, including training of 1,800 teacher educators.
- Increasing access to quality teacher training through the use of ODL and ICT in both pre- and in-service teacher development.

Community Health

- Leading expanding of community radio in India from 13 stations in 2007 to 125 in 2011.
- Working with community groups, media organisations, health agencies and governments to create participatory community learning programmes that address health issues such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, maternal and child health, and nutrition.

Higher Education

- Supporting quality assurance in higher education institutions through the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for effective quality audits.
- Establishing the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth, a collaborative network for creating open educational resources for work-related learning created at the request of Commonwealth Ministers of Education.

Lifelong Learning for Farming

- Helping improve rural economies through Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers), a programme that combines the social mobilisation of villagers, use of commercial ICT kiosks, organisation of consortia of information providers and integration of commercial banks.

Training for International Organisations

- Assisting a growing number of major international organisations to solve training challenges through COL eLearning for International Organisations programmes.

COL is not itself a funding body. In the area of knowledge provision, COL strives to “level the playing field” by developing and running systems that enable policy-makers, educators and learners in the world’s poorest countries to access information and knowledge on par with that available to people in the wealthy G8 countries. COL produces research publications, start-up guides and online resources for governments, institutions and practitioners.

Partners

COL works in close association with Commonwealth governments in a spirit of equality and participation, and operates through a wide range of partnerships. It seeks to create mutually beneficial linkages, especially of a South-South character, between Commonwealth countries.

Key Commonwealth partners include the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO as well as regional governmental organisations such as the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

COL and the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Social Transformation Programmes Division work together closely to ensure that requests from governments for assistance are addressed in a prompt and effective manner. They also maintain effective links with Commonwealth associations (e.g., the Association of Commonwealth Universities) and non-governmental organisations (such as the Commonwealth Consortium for Education) for the same purpose. COL and the Secretariat are specifically harmonising their work in teacher education, health, respect and understanding (Civil Paths to Peace) and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), more fully described in Box 4.5. COL’s expertise and experience in distance education and educational technologies is particularly useful. COL is also assisting the Commonwealth Foundation to update its knowledge management systems.

COL also has strong networks of partners in its various areas of activity. In education, these include the Commonwealth’s distance-teaching universities, open schools, and regional centres

for distance education such as the Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL) serving West Africa and the SADC Distance Education Centre (SADC-CDE) for Southern Africa. It sustains links with NGOs in many countries and has an important relationship with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for developing open educational resources (see Box 4.3).

Structure

COL is governed by an international Board of Governors chaired by H.E., the Hon. Burchell Whiteman, O.J., retired Senator and former Minister of Information and former Minister of Education and Culture, Jamaica. Six major voluntary contributors, currently Canada, India, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa and the United Kingdom, have representatives on COL’s Board of Governors. There are also representatives from all four regions of the Commonwealth – Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Australia has just recently re-joined COL as a major funder.

The current President and Chief Executive Officer is Professor Asha Kanwar, one of the world’s leading advocates of learning for development. Prior to joining COL in 2003, Dr. Kanwar’s experience includes serving as Pro-Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and promoting ODL in Africa as a consultant with UNESCO’s Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) in Dakar, Senegal.

With some 45 employees distributed between its headquarters in Vancouver, Canada and the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) in New Delhi, India, COL reflects the cultural diversity and breadth of the Commonwealth. Senior staff members, who serve on rotation, are recruited from around the Commonwealth in a wide range of distance education and administrative fields.

At approximately Cdn\$11 million per year, COL’s annual budget remains modest for a Commonwealth institution tasked with its broad mandate. COL obtains resources for its work in various ways. Its core financing comes in the form of voluntary contributions from Commonwealth governments. COL augments

Box 4.3: COL's Work with Open Educational Resources (OER)

COL has been at the forefront of the OER movement, which promotes the creation, sharing and adaptation of learning materials that anyone can freely use for teaching, learning, development and research. Most recently, COL spearheaded an initiative to get governments worldwide to recognise officially the importance of sharing OER. 'Fostering Governmental Support for OER Internationally' involved consultation workshops in every region of the Commonwealth and a survey of governments worldwide, culminating in the presentation of the Paris Declaration at UNESCO's World OER Congress in June 2012. The Paris Declaration is a commitment to making educational resources developed with public funds freely available for re-use and re-purposing under open licences.

A previous COL-UNESCO collaboration, 'Taking OER beyond the OER Community' spread awareness of the value of open content, particularly among policy makers and institutional managers. This led to the publication of numerous resources, including *A Basic Guide to Open Educational Resources and Guidelines for OER in Higher Education*.³

COL led a pan-Commonwealth collaboration, 'OER for Open Schools', which involved extensive training in ODL course materials development. Six open schools took part in the initiative, which resulted in the development of course materials in 20 subjects at the Grade 10 level. The materials are freely available as OER, providing both open schools and conventional schools with open access to quality learning materials.

COL also supports the OER University (OERu), a network of colleges, polytechnics and universities from Africa, Asia, North America and the Pacific who are collaborating to provide free learning opportunities for students worldwide using courses based solely on OER.

this major part of its budget with income from other sources such as grants received from other intergovernmental organisations and foundations in support of programme initiatives, fees received for professional services and interest on bank balances. There is also significant 'in kind' support from COL's partners.

Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015

The theme of COL's new Three-Year Plan remains 'Learning for Development'.⁴ This plan extends to 2015, the target date set for the achievement of a number of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). COL uses the internationally agreed MDGs, the Education for

All (EFA) goals and the Commonwealth priorities of peace, democracy, equality and the rule of law as its framework for action. The Plan has three strategic goals:

- **Quality education for all Commonwealth citizens:** Increased access to affordable primary, secondary and tertiary education, especially for girls, women and the marginalised.
- **Human resources development in the Commonwealth:** Sustainable and replicable learning systems in place for farming, health and skills development in the formal and informal sectors.
- **Harnessing ODL and technologies to achieve development goals:** Improved capacity of governments and civil society to provide quality learning for achieving MDG and EFA goals.

COL's work is focused on seven initiatives in two programme sectors. The Education Section includes Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Under Livelihoods and Health, there are three initiatives: Technical and Vocational Skills Development, Lifelong Learning for Farmers and Healthy Communities. Gender and eLearning are cross-cutting themes that underpin and complement all seven initiatives. An overview of current priorities is provided by Box 4.4.

While nearly all of COL's past initiatives will continue to be pursued under this plan for 2012-2015, COL will focus more closely on the outcome and impact of these initiatives. The emphasis in this Three-Year Plan is on skills development, the education of girls and women, and promoting the use of open educational resources (OER). Further details about VUSSC are shown in Box 4.5.

Each sector pursues its aims through five core strategies: partnerships, models, policies, capacity and materials. In practice, most COL activities incorporate more than one of these strategies and, in some cases, all five.

³ N. Butcher, *A Basic Guide to Open Educational Resources (Vancouver and Paris: COL and UNESCO, 2011)*; COL, *Guidelines for Open Educational Resources (OER) in Higher Education (Vancouver: COL, 2012)*.

⁴ <http://www.col.org/resources/publications/Pages/detail.aspx?PID=388>.

Box 4.4: Programme-level Intermediate Outcomes and Performance Indicators of COL

1. Education

Initiatives: Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

Outcome: Target institutions improve the accessibility and quality of their formal education systems at all levels through the use of ODL.

Performance indicator: 60 secondary and post-secondary institutions in four regions of the Commonwealth improve the quality and diversity of their provision to reach 100,000 learners.

2. Livelihoods and Health

Initiatives: Technical and Vocational Skills Development, Lifelong Learning for Farmers and Healthy Communities.

Outcome: Partners and development organisations offer better and more non-formal learning opportunities to women, youth and resource-poor communities to improve their livelihoods through the use of ODL.

Performance indicator: 80,000 citizens acquire better skills and knowledge to enhance their income and health.

Looking forward

In its third decade, COL must achieve even greater impact in a new environment. Persistent economic difficulties in richer countries and the rapid emergence of China and other developing countries have rendered the traditional paradigm of development aid obsolete. This plan takes COL to 2015, the target date for the achievement of most of the Millennium Development Goals. No matter how patchy the scorecard for those goals may then appear, it is most unlikely that world bodies will update the Millennium Declaration and allocate new development aid resources to revised goals. Developing countries are likely to be largely on their own in addressing the considerable challenges of expanding schooling and learning that they will still face.

COL will be a preferred partner in helping these countries to maximise the impact of their efforts for three reasons:

- The key imperative for education systems will be to achieve scale with quality and equity at low cost. Open, distance and technology-based approaches, which are the most feasible way of achieving this, will come into

their own. COL is a world-class source of expertise for these approaches.

- COL has always worked from the grassroots upwards by refining models of development that tap into the entrepreneurial spirit of local people and the dynamism of community and institutional leaders.
- Where external bodies, private or public, are ready to invest in education and skills development in particular countries, COL can help them achieve impact for their investment by adapting to local contexts its proven models for expanding both formal and informal learning.

Box 4.5: Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

COL launched the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) on behalf of Commonwealth Ministers of Education.⁵ Thirty-three countries from all Commonwealth regions are actively engaged in making the VUSSC a reality.

VUSSC countries have chosen to focus on creating post-secondary, skills-related courses in areas such as tourism, entrepreneurship, professional development, disaster management, the fisheries industry and a range of technical and vocational subjects. These non-proprietary, electronically-held course materials, which can readily be adapted to the specific context of each country, are used in the offering of credit-bearing qualifications in the countries' postsecondary institutions, strengthening their educational capacity and outreach.

Small states thus become active contributors to global development and leaders in educational reform through the innovative use of ICT. The VUSSC is throwing a wide bridge across the digital divide.

VUSSC course materials have been developed at a series of pan-Commonwealth workshops facilitated by COL. Since 2006, the Bahamas, Lesotho, the Maldives, Mauritius, Samoa, the Seychelles, Singapore, and Trinidad and Tobago have hosted VUSSC workshops to train educators in information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Participants at the workshops began to create course materials, continuing their collaboration after returning home.

Newly developed VUSSC course materials are available as OER through COL's website, which provides free access to these university-level courses, along with many other courses. The VUSSC Transnational Qualifications Framework facilitates the transfer of courses and credits between countries and give students confidence in the legitimacy of these eLearning programmes. VUSSC is now led by a Management Committee with representation from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth.

⁵ See <http://www.vussc.org>.

Chapter 5: THE COMMONWEALTH AND EDUCATION FOR ALL

Steve Packer

The Commonwealth commitment

In modern times, the concept of Education for All (EFA) has its basis in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Articulated as an expanded vision of basic education at the World Conference on Education in Jomtien (1990), six EFA goals were agreed at the World Education Forum in Dakar (April 2000). Later in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were endorsed, including specific targets for universal primary education (UPE), and gender parity in schooling.

The Commonwealth has made its own broad political commitment to EFA on a regular basis. Following Jomtien, the 1991 Harare Declaration pledged “provision of universal access to education for the population of our countries”.¹ Post-Dakar, in the *Halifax Statement on Education in the Commonwealth (2000)*, Commonwealth Ministers of Education reiterated their belief in “the right of everyone to education”.²

At the 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) in Malaysia 2009, in what has become something of a CCEM ritual, Ministers:

Reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) goals by the 2015 deadline. However, they noted that one-third of Commonwealth countries have yet to achieve universal primary education and gender parity. They agreed to prioritise the challenge of reaching some 27 million Commonwealth children, who do not currently receive schooling, and those who do not complete primary education successfully, to make universal primary education a reality.³

More recently, Commonwealth Heads of Government (meeting in Perth, Australia, 2011) agreed to “promote inclusive education and to

accelerate efforts to achieve quality universal primary education, in line with the MDGs and Education for All goals”. They further agreed “to help children attain basic levels of literacy and numeracy by strengthening international mechanisms and co-operation, including through new technologies”. They called for a “successful completion of the first replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education in Copenhagen in November 2011”.⁴

From Jomtien to Dakar and New York and to the Global Partnership for Education

At Jomtien, The World Declaration on Education for All was adopted along with its Framework for Action.⁵ The Declaration focused on basic learning needs and the goals of universalising access and promoting equity. It is widely agreed that Jomtien put basic education back on national and international policy agendas. However, progress on access and quality was relatively modest during the 1990s, as the 2000 EFA Assessment demonstrated clearly.⁶ While the Dakar Forum of 2000 re-affirmed Jomtien’s objectives, it was agreed that more specific goals and targets should be set.

Six ambitious EFA goals – both quantitative and qualitative – were agreed and set out in the *Dakar Framework for Action*⁷:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young

¹ Commonwealth Heads of Government, *Harare Commonwealth Declaration 1991* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1991).

² http://www.thecommonwealth.org/document/181889/34293/35232/191279/35248/14th_conference_of_commonwealth_education_minister.htm.

³ 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers – Kuala Lumpur Communiqué. http://www.thecommonwealth.org/document/208198/17ccem_communique.htm.

⁴ Commonwealth Heads of Government, *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2011 Communiqué* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011), <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/subhomepage/33247>.

⁵ UNESCO, *World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs* (Paris: UNESCO, 1990).

⁶ http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/efa_2000_assess/index.shtml.

⁷ *The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000) <http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/en-conf/dakfram.shtml>.

people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes;

4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The Dakar Framework for Action also called for (a) a global initiative aimed at developing the strategies and mobilising the resources needed to provide effective support to national efforts; (b) UNESCO's continuation of its mandated role in co-ordinating EFA partners and maintaining their collaborative momentum including through the creation of a high-level EFA group to be convened by UNESCO's Director-General and (c) an international EFA monitoring report. It affirmed too that "no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources".

At the UN Millennium Summit in New York later in 2000, the Millennium Declaration was agreed. It included eight goals designed to reduce significantly all major aspects of poverty by 2015.⁸ In recognition of the importance of a good basic education for reducing poverty, the second goal is to "ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling". The fifth goal, to promote gender equality and empower women, includes the target "to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015".

While the EFA goals and the MDG goals and targets are broadly complementary in their

⁸ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

⁹ <http://www.educationfasttrack.org>

¹⁰ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/international-cooperation/high-level-group/>

¹¹ UNESCO, *Executive Board Reports by the Director General on Education for All: Report on the Role for UNESCO as Global Coordinator and Leader of Education for All (EFA) (Paris: UNESCO, 2011)*.

intentions, the EFA agenda is a good deal broader than the education MDGs which focus entirely on schooling. It is grounded in a strong human rights approach to education, recognising the education rights and needs of all age groups. The MDGs are driven strongly by the goal of poverty reduction. In some countries, and in some international agencies, these different emphases have given rise to some tension in education-sector and poverty-reduction planning.

In 2002, the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) was launched as a global partnership designed to help low-income countries achieve the education MDGs. In 2011, FTI was re-launched as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) with "a new commitment to provide quality education for all children".⁹ A GPE Replenishment Campaign was launched for US\$1.5 billion for the period 2012-2014 in order to put an additional 25 million children into school. The GPE represents the single most important international response to the commitment to meet the EFA and MDG goals made in 2000. Of the 47 countries that have received technical and financial support from GPE, 13 are members of the Commonwealth (Cameroon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia).

Co-ordination and monitoring

In response to recommendations from Dakar, the UNESCO Director-General convened ten EFA High-Level Group meetings between 2001 and 2011.¹⁰ These gatherings have had very limited profile and impact. Yet only in 2011 was UNESCO's EFA co-ordination role reviewed.¹¹ Now an EFA High-Level Forum is to be held annually: it is to be organised on the sidelines of a major high-level meeting, such as the United Nations General Assembly, "to take advantage of the presence of political leaders".

Outside the UN machinery, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) has established a high-level panel, convened jointly by Gordon Brown and Graça Machel to work with a group of influential, international figures to boost efforts to achieve Education for All. This type of campaigning approach would have served UNESCO well immediately post-Dakar.

An editorially independent EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) was established in 2002, based at UNESCO in Paris. The GMR will publish its tenth annual report in 2012 on the theme of EFA and skills development.¹² The report monitors and analyses progress towards the EFA goals, and assesses the level and the quality of international aid for EFA. It explores significant EFA themes: gender equality (2003/04); quality (2005); literacy (2006); early childhood development and education (2007); governance (2009); reaching the marginalised (2010); and education and conflict (2011). It works closely with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), which has an international mandate to collect, quality-assure and analyse education data.¹³

Progress towards the MDGs is also monitored by the UN Statistics Division through the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on MDG Indicators.¹⁴ The World Bank too issues its own Global Monitoring Report¹⁵ each year to chart progress on the MDGs.

Progress and prospects¹⁶

The 53 full member countries of the Commonwealth¹⁷ are diverse in terms of population, size, income levels and their place on the ladder of progress towards EFA. Approximately, 55 per cent of the peoples of the Commonwealth live in India, while 19 countries (36 per cent) have a population below 500,000 (2011 estimates). Eleven Commonwealth countries are high-income (as classified by the World Bank), 28 middle-income and 12 low-income. On UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) rankings, 22 Commonwealth countries have a very high or high HDI, 12 a medium ranking and 16 countries (almost entirely in Sub-Saharan Africa) a low HDI (2011 estimates).

It is estimated (2010 data) that 61 million children are *out of school* worldwide at the primary and junior secondary levels (105 million

in 1990), of whom 53 per cent are girls (58 per cent in 2000).¹⁸ This figure includes children who have never enrolled in school (47 per cent), those who have dropped out (26 per cent) and those are expected to enter school in the future (27 per cent). While the overall trend is positive, most impressively in South and West Asia, there have been no significant improvements in the last three years (2008-2010); indeed, in sub-Saharan Africa the total figure of out-of-school children has risen from 29 million in 2008 to 31 million in 2010.

As Figure 5.1 shows, seven Commonwealth countries had more than 500,000 children out of school in 2010. It is estimated that Nigeria has 17 per cent of the world's out-of-school children,¹⁹ while India and Pakistan together have 12 per cent.

Patterns of the enrolment of primary school age children vary across the Commonwealth (see Table 5.1). For 43 countries for which net enrolment data are available for 2008, 16 have net enrolment rates (NERs) of 95 per cent and above.²⁰ Many of these countries have a long tradition of free and compulsory primary education but some, such as Tanzania and Zambia, have shown recent and rapid increases in levels of enrolment as the result of major policy reforms and increased levels of investment in basic education.

Further down the continuum, 19 countries have primary NERs between 61 per cent and 90 per cent; 12 of these being in sub-Saharan Africa. Eight countries have NERs of 75 per cent or lower – i.e. more than 25 per cent of their school age children out of school (Dominica, the Gambia, Lesotho, Nauru, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Solomon Islands).²¹

¹² <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2012-skills>.

¹³ <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=IAEG.htm>

¹⁵ <http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTDECPROSPECTS/0,,contentMDK:22876426~menuPK:7859331~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:476883,00.html>

¹⁶ This section is restricted to brief consideration of the EFA goals of UPE, gender parity and literacy.

¹⁷ Fiji is currently suspended from the Commonwealth. Nominally it is the 54th member.

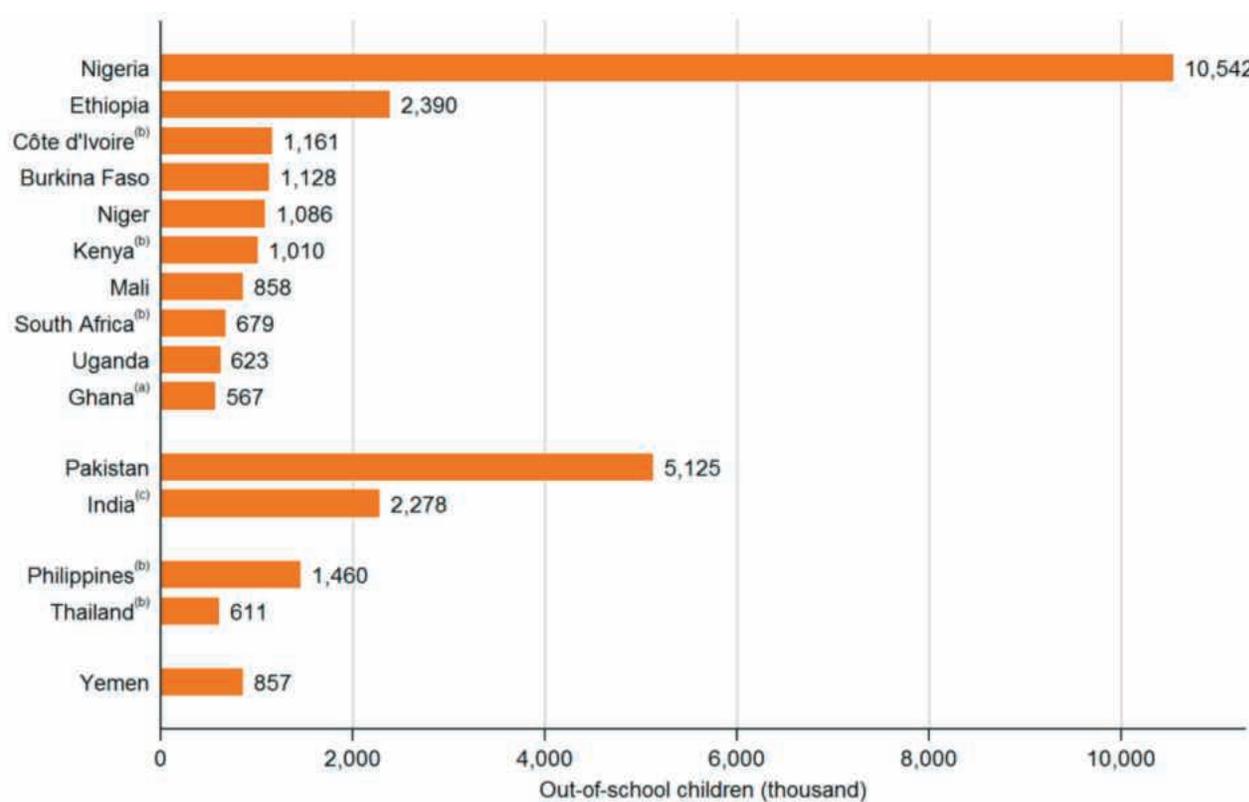
¹⁸ Data for this section are derived from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), *Reaching Out of School Children is Crucial for Development: Fact Sheet No. 18*. (Montreal, UIS, 2012).

¹⁹ This figure must be interpreted with some caution, given that millions of Nigerian children attend Islamic schools.

²⁰ UNESCO, *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011. The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011).

²¹ The inclusion of Dominica is almost certainly due to a data error in the statistics.

FIGURE 5.1: COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN 500,000 CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL, 2010



Source: UIS, Fact Sheet No. 18 (Note 18).

Notes: (a) Data for 2011; (b) Data for 2009; (c) Data for 2008. Figure presents selected countries with available data.

The MDG and EFA gender parity target-date of 2005 for primary and secondary education was passed with mixed success. Had the world achieved gender parity at the primary level in 2005, in 2008 there would have been an additional 3.4 million girls in primary school.²² Based on 2008 data, globally, two-thirds of 181 countries had achieved gender parity in primary education and one-third of 177 countries had achieved parity at the secondary level.

As Table 5.1 (page 28) shows, 27 Commonwealth countries for which data are available are within two decimal points of the Gender Parity Index of 1 at the primary level. The majority of this group achieved parity at the primary level decades ago, but the very significant progress that many African countries have made has come in the last ten years (e.g. Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda). In some countries there is still a significant gap to close (e.g. Cameroon, Nigeria, and Pakistan); in others, disparities are now in favour of girls (e.g. Bangladesh).

²² UNESCO (Note 20).

Although data are unreliable and difficult to compare across countries, it is estimated that, globally, 17 per cent of the world's population lack basic literacy skills. Women make up nearly two-thirds of this total. The majority of these disadvantaged peoples live in ten countries, three of which are Commonwealth countries in South Asia (India 283 million; Pakistan 51 million; Bangladesh 49 million). With Nigeria (35 million), these four countries are home to over 50 per cent of the world total. Adult literacy is, relatively speaking, the poor EFA relation in terms of the national and international attention that it receives; accordingly, the prospects for short-term improvements appear limited. The absolute numbers of people without literacy continue to rise. (See also the discussion in Chapter 7.) Lack of literacy skills, however, is not a challenge in developing countries alone: recent data from the United Kingdom, for example, suggests that up to five million of its adults cannot read effectively.

TABLE 5.1: Primary Net Enrolment Rates and Gender Parity Indices in Commonwealth countries, 2008, by Region					
COUNTRY	PRIMARY EDUCATION NER	PRIMARY GENDER PARITY INDEX	COUNTRY	PRIMARY EDUCATION NER	PRIMARY GENDER PARITY INDEX
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA			EUROPE & NORTH AMERICA		
Botswana	87.0	1.02	Canada	n.a.	n.a.
Cameroon	88.0	0.87	Cyprus	99.0	0.99
The Gambia	69.0	1.07	Malta	91.0	1.01
Ghana	77.0	1.01	United Kingdom	100.0	1.00
Kenya	82.0	1.01			
Lesotho	73.0	1.04	CARIBBEAN		
Malawi	88.0	1.06	Antigua & Barbuda	88.0	0.94.
Mauritius	94.0	1.01	Bahamas	91.0	1.02
Mozambique	80.0	0.94	Barbados	n.a.	n.a.
Namibia	89.0	1.05	Belize	98.0	1.00
Nigeria	61.0	0.90	Dominica	72.0	1.09
Rwanda	96.0	1.03	Grenada	93.0	0.98
Seychelles	n.a.	n.a.	Guyana	95.0	1.00
Sierra Leone	n.a.	n.a.	Jamaica	80.0	0.97
South Africa	87.0	1.00	St Kitts & Nevis	n.a.	n.a.
Swaziland	83.0	1.02	St Lucia	91.0	0.99
Tanzania	99.0	1.03	St Vincent	95.0	0.94
Uganda	96.0	1.00	Trinidad and Tobago	92.0	0.99
Zambia	95.0	1.01			
			PACIFIC		
ASIA			Australia	97.0	1.01
Bangladesh	85.0	1.02	Kiribati	n.a.	n.a.
Brunei Darussalam	93.0	1.00	Nauru	72.0	1.01
India	90.0	0.96	New Zealand	99.0	1.01
Malaysia	96.0	1.00	Papua New Guinea	n.a.	n.a.
Maldives	96.0	0.98	Samoa	93.0	1.00
Pakistan	66.0	0.83	Solomon Islands	67.0	1.00
Singapore	n.a.	n.a.	Tonga	99.0	n.a.
Sri Lanka	99.0	1.01	Tuvalu	n.a.	n.a.
			Vanuatu	n.a.	n.a.

Source: UNESCO (Note 20).

A number of Commonwealth countries have demonstrated that it is possible to move much faster towards the EFA goals and the education MDGs through major policy reforms. But significant gains in access and equity have to be matched with an equally strong determination to improve efficiency and quality.

Challenges

Virtually all low-income Commonwealth countries have developed poverty reduction strategies and education sector plans and programmes that give weight to EFA and basic education and how to improve the “triumvirate” of access, equity and quality. Increasingly, these programmes have to deal with challenges that extend beyond the boundaries of the education sector. This discussion will focus on the four areas of costs, educational quality, HIV/AIDS and violent conflict.

The challenge of meeting school fees and other charges is exacerbated by the global economic downturn. The rise in food prices is of particular importance. Studies from Bangladesh, Kenya and Zambia show that children are being withdrawn from school. The World Bank suggests that an additional 350,000 will fail to complete primary school because of the crisis. Malnutrition limits school attendance and learning.

The ability of governments to counteract the education costs of the crisis is severely constrained. According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 40 per cent of low income countries with available data cut education spending in 2009. This trend is threatening the progress that many Commonwealth countries have made in abolishing school fees and targeting the neediest students through school feeding and conditional cash transfer programmes. The likelihood of aid filling widening resource gaps is not promising (see below). There is a severe danger that the educational dividends of the past decade will be diluted or at worst lost.

On the second challenge, that of the quality of education, comparative evidence across the Commonwealth is thin. But it seems clear that progress towards improved learning outcomes has lagged behind progress in improving access to schooling. The GPE estimates that:

200 million primary school children in developing countries are struggling to read even basic words...children who fail to read in the early grades will fall further behind each school year, when the reading ability is progressively used as a tool for acquiring other types of knowledge. Poorly performing students struggle to catch up and some of them hopelessly drop out from school.²³

Furthermore, it is estimated that three out of ten youth in developing countries cannot do basic arithmetic.²⁴

Concern about quality is reflected in the fact that twenty-three Commonwealth countries engage in four different international assessment programmes,²⁵ while regional examination bodies in the Caribbean, the South Pacific and West Africa²⁶ facilitate regional overviews of standards. A growing number of countries (over 50 since 2005, including many in the Commonwealth) are undertaking Early Grade Reading Assessments²⁷; there are also comparable assessments for numeracy.²⁸

As recent Commonwealth Education Conferences demonstrate, the issue of quality exercises all governments and education professionals. Proxy measures of quality suggest considerable cause for concern over low levels of learning outcomes. In particular the need for more and better teachers has been a matter of considerable Commonwealth discussion. For example, Mozambique needs to double its primary teaching force to achieve UPE with a pupil-teacher ratio of 40:1, even though it is increasing its teacher stock by 8 per cent per annum. Past rates of teacher recruitment would be insufficient to attain UPE in Uganda,

²³ <http://www.globalpartnership.org/our-work/areas-of-focus/early-grade-reading>.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *The Progress on International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS); the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA); the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS);*

²⁶ *The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) and the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).*

²⁷ See, for example, A. Gove and A. Wetterberg (eds), *The Early Grade Reading Assessment: Applications and Interventions to Improve Basic Literacy* (Durham NC: RTI International, 2011).

²⁸ See <https://www.eddataglobal.org/math/index.cfm>.

Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and Malawi. The levels of qualifications for primary teachers vary considerably across the Commonwealth, from Tonga whose teachers are all tertiary qualified, to Mozambique where 60 per cent of teachers have no more than lower secondary level education.

A third major challenge is the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which over the last 20 years has destroyed much of what education has tried to achieve in many Commonwealth countries. Although the rates of prevalence are falling in many countries, it is estimated that 34 million people of all ages lived with HIV in 2009 (30 million in developing countries; over 16 million in East and Southern Africa alone).²⁹ The estimated number of children living with HIV is 3.4 million, of whom 3.1 million live in Africa. There are over 17 million children who are AIDS orphans (15 million in Africa).

The relationship of HIV/AIDS to education is multi-faceted. On the one hand there is the need to safeguard education: to protect teachers suffering from HIV; to prevent sexual harassment and abuse in schools; to meet shortfalls in teacher supply resulting from death and illness; and to ensure that all children are able to go to school. On the other hand, education must play a lead role in limiting the spread of AIDS through formal and non-formal interventions. These objectives may be enshrined in national AIDS and education strategies, the success of which depends on open communication about AIDS and the activities that put people at risk of infection, on strong political leadership, and on programmes and activities that are tailored to specific education and community needs.

Ministers of Education from Commonwealth Small States recognised their responsibilities in these regards in the Stoke Rochford Statement of 2004. The commitment is made that:

We intend that all our future education sector plans and policies shall take full account of the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the necessity to mobilise education programmes to combat it. This includes preparing projections of learner enrolment and teacher supply that reflect the

latest expectations of retention and loss due to HIV/AIDS.³⁰

The fourth challenge, violent conflict, is taking an enormous toll on education and the ability of states to advance towards EFA. At least 35 countries suffered from conflict from 1999 to 2008 (including a number of Commonwealth countries). Forty-two per cent of the children out of school live in these countries. The EFA GMR of 2011 describes this situation as the Hidden Crisis. It argues that education must be given a much more central role in post-conflict reconstruction agendas, including making education a force for peace.

Aid for EFA

Figure 5.2 shows that, between 2002 and 2009, aid to education increased from US\$6.8 billion to US\$13.4 billion (at constant 2009 values). The figure for basic education increased from US\$2.7 billion to US\$5.6 billion, staying at about 40 per cent of the total aid to education over the past decade. Of this sum approximately US\$3 billion went to the poorest countries whereas the EFA GMR of 2011 estimates that this group of countries requires US\$16 billion a year to achieve the EFA goals by 2015. In the current situation of austerity, there are clear signs of a squeeze on aid budgets which puts this level of assistance out of sight.

The four main donors to education in the Commonwealth are Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Together they provided a total of US\$1.23 billion in 2008 (less than 10 per cent of total aid to education), of which US\$765 billion went to basic education (62 per cent). Australia and the UK remained on an upward trajectory in their support for education; Canada, on the other hand, has reduced its aid budget, with nearly a 15 per cent fall in its ODA for education between 2008 and 2009.³¹

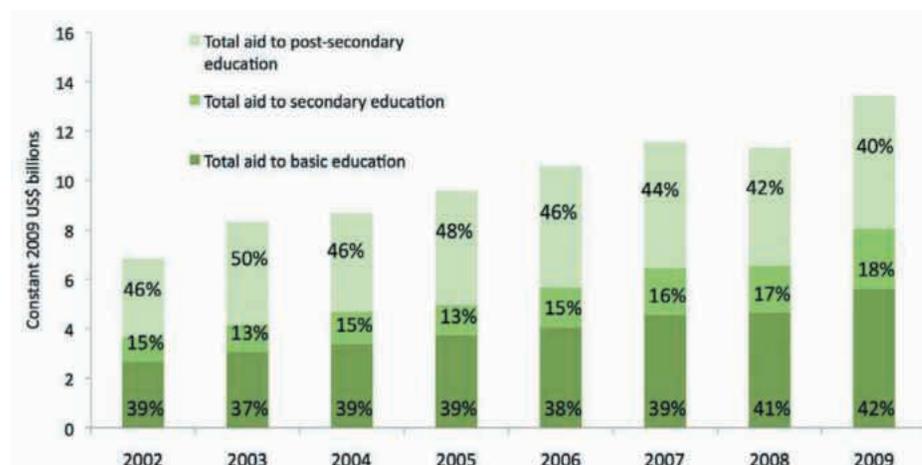
In 2008, 43 Commonwealth countries were in receipt of aid for education. In total, this amounted to approximately US\$2.7 billion of bilateral and multilateral aid. Commonwealth countries of Sub-Saharan Africa received US\$1.65 billion and India, the single largest

²⁹ Data from UNICEF 2012 *The State of the World's Children 2012*.

³⁰ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Education for a World without AIDS. Stoke Rochford Statement on HIV/AIDS and Education* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004).

³¹ These aid data refer to OECD-DAC countries, but increasingly aid is provided by new aid-giving states including India. The data are from: UNESCO (Note 20).

FIGURE 5.2: TOTAL AID TO EDUCATION (DISBURSEMENTS) 2002-2009



Source: UNESCO, *Beyond Busan: Strengthening Aid to Improve Outcomes*, EFA Global Monitoring Report Policy Paper 02 (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002144/214454E.pdf>, 3.

recipient, US\$508 million. Just over 50 per cent (US\$1.45 billion) went to basic education; US\$775 million to sub-Saharan Africa.

If aid to education in Commonwealth countries in 2008 is assessed in terms of expenditure per student of primary school age, there were relatively high levels of aid for many small Commonwealth states with a small student population (Nauru, US\$329; St Kitts and Nevis, US\$216). Of the larger countries, Mozambique received the equivalent of US\$36 and Tanzania US\$12. Aid for education is likely to remain important for a significant number of Commonwealth countries, especially those confronted by conflict and fragility (such as Pakistan), but also for those whose prospects for economic growth are limited in the medium term, a reality that is putting a break on investment in education.

The Commonwealth response

The official institutions of the Commonwealth are not able to play a major financial or technical role in supporting EFA. The Commonwealth cannot mount the level and range of interventions and support for EFA that characterise the work of the World Bank, the UN system and bilateral agencies. While official political statements of the Commonwealth have always been supportive of EFA, its development

machinery is limited in its ability to have a significant impact. It is challenged constantly to demonstrate very specific sorts of expertise and initiative in areas of comparative advantage, such as its work for small states and in open learning. Here a brief overview is given of the activities of three Commonwealth bodies in relation to EFA: the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth of Learning and the Commonwealth Foundation.

The Commonwealth Secretariat, the primary executive organ of the Commonwealth, states that it helps “member countries to provide and manage equitable access to quality education through opportunities in line with the two education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA).”³² It is currently mandated by Commonwealth Ministers of Education and Commonwealth Heads of Government to focus its work on (i) the achievement of Universal Primary Education; (ii) elimination of gender disparities in education; (iii) improvement of quality in education; (iv) use of Distance Learning to overcome barriers; (v) support to education in difficult circumstances; and (vi) the mitigation of the impact of HIV & AIDS on education. This is a very broad agenda.

Given its very limited financial and core human resource capacity, the Secretariat defines its role as advocate, broker and catalyst:

Promoting the need for expansion of access and improvement in retention and completion of education for all learners. ...we focus specially on disadvantaged groups, such as girls, children in rural and urban poor areas, the disabled, those that are nomadic and those who may be learning in environments suffering conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies.³³

³² See <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/subhomepage/1906631> for details of the Secretariat's work programme and its publications³³ Data from UNICEF 2012 *The State of the World's Children 2012*.

³³ *Ibid.*

For each of the last two CCEMs, the Secretariat has published a report on the progress which Commonwealth countries are making in realising the MDG and EFA education goals and targets. The third in this series will be issued in Mauritius for the forthcoming CCEM.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL),³⁴ which works closely with the Secretariat, is based in Vancouver, Canada and has the core mission of helping governments and institutions to expand the scope, scale and quality of learning by using new approaches and technologies, especially those subsumed under the general term of “open and distance learning”. Its main programme initiatives in the education sector have considerable relevance to EFA and focus on four areas: meeting the demand for secondary education through open schooling; the training and upgrading of teachers; facilitating the expansion of quality higher education; and the development of the Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth. Its livelihoods and health programmes also contribute to a more integrated approach to EFA. Further details of the activities and achievements of COL are given in Chapter 4.

Also relevant is the Commonwealth Foundation³⁵, an inter-governmental organisation designed to strengthen and give voice to civil society around the Commonwealth. It has no specific education programme strand, but is active, for example, in preparing for the 18CCEM Stakeholders’ Forum in Mauritius. It will help to bring together, on that occasion, education representatives from business, government, academia, civil society, and the development and donor communities to discuss and debate practical measures to transform education delivery around the Commonwealth. It is active too in providing small grants to civil society organisations that promote and monitor girls’ education.

Looking forward

There are some doubts both about the future of the EFA movement itself and about that of the Commonwealth Secretariat’s work in education. EFA has made significant gains over the past 20 years, but as the world looks beyond 2015, the perceived centrality of an agenda that focuses on basic education is going to be challenged. Attention to higher order skills and knowledge will receive renewed focus as the imperatives of economic growth, rising unemployment, food and water shortages, and sustainable development take centre stage. The importance of a quality basic education will not and should not go away: but EFA – if it is to continue as a movement or campaign – will have to rework its messages and its ability to relate to a changing world.

Since Dakar, the Commonwealth has linked itself strongly to the education MDGs and to EFA. Useful discrete pieces of technical work have been done by the Commonwealth Secretariat over the past 10 years, but the organisation’s education programme has been far too broad for its level of resources. If – as the Secretariat states – it is an advocate, broker and catalyst for better education, the evidence of the benefits of this work is difficult to find, especially if the work is to be evaluated in terms of international impact. If education is to retain a presence in Commonwealth Secretariat’s work programmes, the organisation will need to take a hard look at the type and level of advocacy, brokerage and catalytic skills which can make a difference in a world full of competing international organisations. A fairly fundamental re-appraisal is required to determine whether the education programme has a future and, if so, in what form.

³⁴ <http://www.col.org/Pages/default.aspx>

³⁵ <http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com/Aboutus>

Chapter 6: GENDER AND EDUCATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Casmir Chanda

Introduction

Gender equality is one of the fundamental principles of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 provides the framework within which the Commonwealth will contribute to advancing gender equality, advocating that its achievement should be undertaken in partnership with men and boys.¹ It is important to focus on education for all boys as well as for girls; however, it will be argued here that the need and benefits for girls' education are greater

In 2011, the Commonwealth Day theme of 'Women as Agents of Change' highlighted issues pertaining to women and why educating girls and women is still important. Every year over 26 million girls are born in the Commonwealth. Of these, far too many do not get the chance to grow up and become healthy, educated women who can make a positive difference to their own lives and to the lives of others. Women and girls make up half of the people in the world and have to deal with much more than half of the world's challenges, even though they receive much less than half of the attention and support. They are the barometers of society: they measure its internal pressure levels, and their fortunes can give societies the clearest forecasts of good or bad things to come. Where women prosper, societies prosper; and where women suffer, so too do the societies in which they live.²

Commonwealth Governments are committed to achieving gender equality and parity in education through provision of entitlement, opportunity and capacity for *both girls and boys* belonging to diverse social, ethnic, linguistic or economic groups. They are also committed in particular to the one billion women of the Commonwealth through:

- promoting women's participation and representation in democratic processes, leadership and decision-making;
- promoting the development of gender-responsive laws, judicial processes, customs and practices in keeping with accepted human rights standards;
- building awareness amongst finance ministers and non-government partners on the gender impacts of economic and financial policies; and

- enhancing integration of gender issues in HIV interventions through advocacy, research and information dissemination.

Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education is one of the six action areas set out in the 2003 Commonwealth Edinburgh Action Plan for Education, and the Commonwealth Secretariat has accordingly made this one of the key objectives of its activities in education. It is evident by now, however, that a significant number of member states, among them several Commonwealth countries in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, are not likely to achieve this particular Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target by 2015.

This chapter highlights issues of gender and education in the Commonwealth with particular emphasis on the importance of educating girls and women. It examines Commonwealth interventions to work towards attaining the MDG on gender equality in schools, and the various roles to that end played by the Commonwealth Secretariat; the Commonwealth of Learning (COL); the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan; the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU); and the Commonwealth Countries League Education Fund.

1. The importance of the education of girls and women

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report of 2011, 72 million children of primary school age are not in school.³ Although progress has been made in closing the gender gap in education in many countries, girls still account for 54 per cent of those out of school and girls not in primary school are far less likely than boys ever to attend school. In the Commonwealth about 30 million children do not go to primary school, the majority of them girls.

In the face of persistent discrimination, education equips girls and women with a basic confidence in their abilities and rights, an ability to acquire and process information, and increased earning power. Education is one of the key sectors for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Recent studies indicate that poverty is not always the key impediment to progress for men and

¹ Commonwealth Secretariat, *The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat).

² Speech of the Commonwealth Secretary-General on Commonwealth Day, 2011.

³ UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011. *The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011).

women or girls and boys. Discrimination against women is the impediment. Women can be “agents of change” when they are genuinely empowered, valued as equal citizens and equipped to play a full part in the nations and communities – the Commonwealth – of which they are members.⁴

There is now empirical evidence that female education has a particularly important role to play in promoting economic development in a broad sense. It does so directly by allowing educated females to become part of the work force, to increase their productivity and contribute to economic growth. A number of studies have shown that countries with a large gender imbalance in their education have ended up growing more slowly than those that have better balance since they are not drawing on their best talents, but are neglecting one half of their population.⁵

It is important to note, however, that education is not a silver bullet for eliminating gender disparity, and several studies suggest that the potential of education to transform can be overstated. Women, even those who do get an education, face embedded disadvantages in labour markets, property ownership and sexual and reproductive choices. Bolder action is needed on all of these fronts.

2. Commonwealth performance against the MDG on gender equality in schools

Various attempts have been made to measure performance on gender equality. All of them recognise that the complex processes that take place in education, especially with regard to gender dynamics, are not particularly amenable to analysis through ‘simple’ measures based on inputs and outputs to the system. The Commonwealth Secretariat through its “Beyond Access” project⁶, has contributed in developing a new instrument in the form of the Gender Equality in Education Index (GEEI) which is a composite of some of the main areas of importance with regard to gender equity and girls’ education, namely:

- girls’ net attendance rate at primary school
- girls’ survival rate over five years in primary school
- girls’ secondary net enrolment ratio
- the country’s gender development index.

A study of Commonwealth countries in Africa indicated some correlation between the gender equity score and the wealth of a country (expressed here by GDP per capita); this is to be expected, since universal public education is only possible in a healthy economic environment, and the same factors (for example conflict) that inhibit economic growth are also likely to inhibit the provision of education for girls. Yet GDP does not tell the whole story. Impoverished countries like Tanzania and Zambia perform significantly better than the richer Cameroon; and South Africa is some way from top place in the GEEI.

The Gender, Equality and Education Report Card for South Asia includes other indicators such as political will, transparency and accountability, access to basic education, infrastructure, quality, incentives, equality and barriers to education. The indicator for equality of access to basic education shows that Sri Lanka is leading the Commonwealth South Asian countries.

Country	Female net enrolment rates (%) in:			Percentage of adult women with basic literacy
	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Secondary education	
Bangladesh	9	86	43	48
India	48	88	52	54
Pakistan	36	60	29	40
Sri Lanka	90	100	88	89

Note: Adapted from Narayan et al. (Note 7).

In Africa and other parts of the world the combination of debt, decline in social-sector provision, war, and repressive governments has had devastating effects on gender equality in education. Violent conflict, for example, is one of the greatest development challenges facing the international community. Beyond the immediate human suffering it causes, it is a source of poverty, inequality and economic stagnation. Children and

⁴ Plan UK and the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS), *Because You’re a Girl: Growing up in the Commonwealth* London: RCS and Plan UK, 2011), <http://plan-international.org/girls/static/docs/because-youre-a-girl.pdf>

⁵ UNICEF, *Gender Achievements and Prospects in Education: the GAP Report (Part One)*, New York: UNICEF, 2005).

⁶ E. Unterhalter, C. Challender and R. Rajagopalan, “Measuring Gender Equality in Education”, in *Beyond Access: Transforming Policy and Practice for Gender Equality in Education*, ed. S. Aikmanand and E. Unterhalter, 60-79 (Oxford: Oxfam Publications, 2005).

⁷ S. Narayan, N. Rao and M.L.A. Khan, *Gender, Equality and Education: a Report Card on South Asia* (Kathmandu: Digiscan Pre-press Pvt. Ltd., 2010).

education systems are often on the front line of violent conflict. Armed conflict is robbing 28 million children of an education by exposing them to widespread sexual violence, targeted attacks on schools and other abuses.⁸

There is a need for governments, Commonwealth ones among them, to mobilise resources to prevent conflict and address gender equality and parity. Education accounts for just 2 per cent of humanitarian aid, yet six days of military spending by aid donors would close the US\$16 billion Education For All external financing gap.

A considerable task still remains for most of the Commonwealth countries in Africa. Only in Uganda was there huge government and civil-society mobilisation for gender equality in education.

3. The Commonwealth Secretariat's Work on Gender and Education

In the area of education the Secretariat is focussing on impacting gender-related practices in classrooms so that schools act as transformative institutions rather promoting the status quo. Through seven case studies of secondary schools in India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Samoa, the Seychelles, and Trinidad and Tobago, *Exploring the Bias* analyses whether schools perpetuate gender stereotypes and investigates how this can be prevented.⁹ The study recommends gender-responsive schools as a way forward in transforming education, implying creation of an ethos that promotes gender equality in all aspects of the classroom and other school activities.

Kelleher's study on women and the teaching profession indicates that there is a significant proportion of female teachers at the early childhood and primary levels, yet these numbers dwindle at the secondary and higher levels of education.¹⁰ This disparity in numbers seems to affect access to secondary schooling for girls and the achievement of gender parity in some Commonwealth countries. It is recommended that countries find ways to attract more women to the teaching profession, especially in secondary and tertiary education.

The Secretariat is also becoming increasingly aware of the problem of boys' underachievement in some countries. In collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning, it commissioned a cross-national study on boys' underachievement.¹¹ Underachievement by boys is focused primarily among the Commonwealth's high- and middle-income countries, where the relative underachievement of boys tends to be confined mainly to underperformance in language. Low male attendance at school in low-income countries is often attributable to economic causes such as early labour-force participation. The trend, though still not as sharp as observed in disparities against girls, is becoming more evident and deserves greater attention and analysis.

A comparative study of four Commonwealth countries – Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Tanzania – reveals that quality teacher deployment is a challenge for most countries, particularly those undergoing expansion and re-structuring of their education systems.¹² The study recommends a focused approach to the education and recruitment of female teachers, coupled with corresponding targeted teacher-education initiatives which encourage more young female teachers into the teaching profession. Teacher incentives must be articulated with an understanding of the desired effect they will have on female teachers. At the bureaucratic level, the recruitment of teachers also needs to be able to respond to gender needs at the district and school levels.

Efforts to reach school-age children, especially girls, have in many places been thwarted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Education systems have been devastated by the loss of teachers and administrators to illness and death. Schools in rural areas are especially hard hit because teachers often relocate to urban areas where they or their family members can access medical care in hospitals and health clinics. Some schools have seen pupil-teacher ratios ballooning to 96 to 1 as a result of HIV-related illness. High absenteeism brought on by HIV/AIDS has contributed to the decimation of national education systems. The epidemic's complete toll on Africa's children is immeasurable; on account of HIV/AIDS, they may have never seen the inside of a classroom. Orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS

⁸ UNESCO (Note 2).

⁹ E. Page and J. Jha, *Exploring the Bias: Gender and Stereotyping in Secondary Schools* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009);

¹⁰ F. Kelleher, *Women and the Teaching Profession* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011).

¹¹ J. Jha and F. Kelleher, *Boys' Underachievement in Education* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007).

¹² F. Kelleher, *Primary School Teacher Deployment* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2008).

are kept from school to care for sick relatives, or they join the labour market to bring extra income into the household.

HIV and AIDS impact on women and girls in various ways. Girls are disproportionately affected and represent the fastest growing segment of new infections. A woman is seven times more likely to catch the disease from a man than vice versa and 61 per cent of all adults infected are women. Education can reduce girls' vulnerability to HIV, principally by helping them build their self-esteem and capacity to act on HIV-prevention messages, by influencing the level of power within sexual relations and by leading to better economic prospects.¹³

4. The Commonwealth of Learning and gender in education

The President of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is now a woman – Asha Kanwar. COL is committed to removing barriers to women's access to education through the delivery of gender-balanced projects and initiatives that are specifically targeted to benefit women and girls. COL is also committed to participating in the implementation of the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development. In awarding its fellowships COL pays special attention to achieving a more equitable gender balance; even so the percentage awarded to females was still only 37.5 per cent in 2009.

Open and distance education, because of its flexibility and accessibility, has the potential to engage the previously 'unreached', such as the disabled, rural poor and girls and women. Distance education thus helps girls and women to overcome many of the barriers they face in trying to access conventional education systems.

COL enabled and supported the work of Women's International Network (WIN) to establish Lifelong Learning for Women's Empowerment. Some of the earlier studies showed the absence of gender in lifelong learning and how women can use technologies for open and distance learning.¹⁴ WIN was founded as a place where women can develop their careers,

their business acumen, their contacts and their lives. But there are millions more women who do not have the opportunity to utilise the many resources that many of us take for granted. At a book-launching ceremony, held on 19 May 2011 in Mauritius, COL's President reiterated its commitment to women's empowerment.

In most countries in the Commonwealth, we find that it is women who are disadvantaged. Of the 796 million illiterate adults in the world, two thirds are women. In sub-Saharan Africa, women produce 80 per cent of the crops but only own one per cent of the land. Almost eight out of ten farmers who produce staple food in Africa are women but most of them do not own land or resources in their name nor do they have access to credit. Studies in Africa show that when women generate income through agriculture, it benefits not only the families but entire communities. Countries now realise that women play a crucial role in development and it is important that they are empowered. If women are to become empowered, they must have three things: rights, resources, and a voice.

5. Gender balance in Commonwealth Scholarships

As described in Chapter 3 of this volume, the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) was instituted in 1959 following recommendations of the first Commonwealth Education Conference and is the flagship scheme of Commonwealth higher education co-operation. The awards recognise and promote the highest level of intellectual achievement.

The United Kingdom has regularly accounted for a high proportion of the awards made under the Plan and it has been UK policy to offer awards to all other Commonwealth states. While not practising positive discrimination in selection, the UK Commission seeks to encourage the participation of women and has in recent years, increasingly highlighted to nominating agencies the need to ensure a fair gender balance in their selections.

Particular attention will be given to gender balance, with the proportion of awards to women expected to rise from 41 per cent to over 45 per

¹³ See R.D. Johnson, *Gender, HIV/AIDS and the Status of Teachers: Report of the Third Commonwealth Teachers Research Symposium* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat and Education International, 2008).

¹⁴ A. Rogers, "Lifelong Learning and the Absence of Gender", *International Journal of Educational Development* 26 no. 2 (2006): 189-208.

cent during the four-year period 2011-14. This will continue significant moves by the Commission to ensure greater access to its programmes from previously disadvantaged groups in recent years. However, the need for continuing action on gender is also demonstrated by the figures, particularly from the Academic Staff Scholarships and Academic Fellowships schemes.

6. The ACU programmes for professional development of women academics

The Association for Commonwealth Universities (ACU) began in 1985 to address the problem of enhancing the participation of women in higher education management. It works with many international partners, such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNESCO and the International Federation of Women. The ACU and the Secretariat have worked closely in developing the remit of the Women's Programme; and since 1991 have planned and given financial support to a wide variety of projects. They make interventions on two fronts: changing the management structures of universities and enhancing the capacity of women in universities to break through 'the glass ceiling' into top management positions. They have also developed training modules in management, leadership, research, and mentoring skills.

The Policy Research Unit, one of the core services of the ACU, conducted a survey on international trends in the recruitment and retention of academic staff in 2005.¹⁵ Its report sees an increase in the number of female academics as a desirable demographic trend. The trend is much more prevalent in economically advantaged countries such as Australia, Canada and the USA.

Future activities of the ACU are to move towards: mainstreaming gender concerns throughout higher education; undertaking extensive advocacy work with those in a position to effect change; instituting gender sensitisation programmes training for both men and women in higher education; extending the network of senior women managers; and developing more link and exchange programmes between women's study centres.

¹⁵ M. Hilary, R. Heather, S. Philip and W. Martin, *Recruitment and Retention of Academic Staff in Higher Education* (Nottingham: National Institute of Economic and Social Research, 2005).

7. Work of Commonwealth Countries League's Education Fund

Since 1925 the Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) has promoted the development, education and empowerment of women. The challenge of providing free and universal secondary education in countries struggling with development, health and economic issues cannot always be met. Even when basic tuition is provided free, families may not be able to afford the associated costs: travel, uniform, books and examination fees. Girls can be especially vulnerable if they are expected to remain at home to help care for the family or work in the fields or markets. Sadly, in some cases education for girls is still viewed as a waste of time.

The CCL Education Fund (CCLEF), the charitable arm of CCL formed in the 1960s, sponsors girls of high potential, enabling them to complete their secondary school education in cases where, without such help, they would be unable to do so. Over 4,000 girls around the Commonwealth have benefited. Funds raised provide sponsorship to assist disadvantaged girls of high academic ability to complete their secondary education in their own countries. The Education Fund is currently sponsoring nearly 400 girls in 27 Commonwealth countries.

A major CCL initiative is its Alumnae Association, launched in 2003 in Abuja, Nigeria. It is hoped to strengthen and maintain contact with girls previously sponsored by the Education Fund. They, in turn, will be active in communicating with each other across the Commonwealth and in supporting the education of girls and women, especially through secondary school.

In May 2011, the CCLEF launched the "A Thousand Schools for a Thousand Girls" (TSTG) initiative in the Houses of Parliament in London. The purpose of the project is to increase the number of girls sponsored by the CCLEF to 1,000 girls and build understanding and awareness of girls' need for education in Commonwealth countries. Schools in the UK are encouraged to enrol in the TSTG initiative and commit themselves to raising funds to sponsor one or more girls through secondary schooling in their own countries. The project has gained support from individuals, organisations and other Commonwealth associations.

Chapter 7: COMMONWEALTH CO-OPERATION ON LITERACY

John Oxenham

Introduction

Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults is the fourth goal of “Education for All” that Heads of Government have laid down as a Commonwealth priority. This briefing paper first surveys the state of adult – and especially female – literacy in the Commonwealth and then goes on to look at the status of Commonwealth co-operation in the area. Box 7.1 gives the statistics on literacy, as they appear in the 2009 Global Monitoring Report (GMR 2009) on progress towards Education for All.¹

Literacy and illiteracy in the Commonwealth

According to the GMR 2009, pp.93-96, there are just under 776 million non-literate adults in the world, of whom nearly 500 million (64 per cent) are women. A full third of these men and women live in India, while a further fifth live elsewhere in the Commonwealth. That is to say, the Commonwealth accounts for about half the number of the world’s non-literate adults, although it accounts for only a third of the world’s total population: it is currently over-represented in the statistics of illiteracy.

Table 7.1 sets out the statistics for the rates of adult literacy in 33 of the 53 Commonwealth countries in 2006. No figures are available for the other 20 countries; however, as column 5 shows, most of these have high rates of female net primary enrolment and can therefore be expected to have relatively high rates of adult literacy – indeed, in eight of them the net enrolment ratio (NER) is close to or exceeds 90 per cent.

For males in the 33 countries, the range of rates lies between a low of 49 per cent and a high of 99 per cent, while for females the range is between a low of 26 per cent and a high of 99 per cent. While this confirms the persistence of gender inequity in the Commonwealth, as in the rest of the world, it is worth noting not only that six members have already achieved parity between females and males, but also that in four countries rates for females are actually higher, ranging between 1 and 16 per cent

more than males. This phenomenon has given rise to concerns about male perceptions of the importance of literacy and education.

The target and projected rates of literacy for 2015 shown in Table 7.2 suggest that all members will have made strong progress towards their targets, with several exceeding them and only three falling slightly short. Just six members are likely to remain below 75 per cent and only two, both emerging from severe civil conflict, are expected to have overall literacy rates below 50 per cent.

The GMR 2009 used statistics that were either self-reported – and not tested for accuracy – or based on a simple definition of the ability to read and write, with understanding, a short, simple statement relating to daily life. In contrast, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) undertook an ‘Adult Life Skills and Literacy Survey’ (IALS²) in the 1990s and followed it up with an ‘Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey’ (ALL³,) in 2003. Four Commonwealth members participated: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK, while a fifth, Malaysia, used the approach to run its own feasibility study. Two points will illustrate the difference between the GMR statistics and those of IALS and ALL.

First, the IALS did not define literacy in terms of an arbitrary standard of reading performance, distinguishing those who completely fail the test (the ‘illiterates’) from those who reach a minimum threshold (those who are ‘literate’). Rather, it took literacy and numeracy as continuums of proficiency levels at which adults use information to function in society and the economy. Second, within the continuum the OECD measured five levels of difficulty for prose literacy, document literacy and numeracy. It found that the two lower levels, 1 and 2, which signified basic abilities to read and write, were inadequate for everyday life in those societies: only achieving level 3 ensured a suitable minimum for the demands of everyday life and work, and that level was “roughly equal to successful secondary school completion and college entry.”

The study revealed that in all four participating Commonwealth countries more than 40 per cent of their peoples had attained only the first

¹ UNESCO, 2008, *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: why governance matters*, Paris, UNESCO, Table 2, pp. 268-275 and Table 5, pp. 300-307.

² OECD, 2000, *Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey*, Paris.

³ ALL, 2005, *Learning a Living: First results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey*, Paris, OECD.

Table 7.1: Adult Literacy Rates and Female Primary Net Enrolment Rate, 2006

MEMBER STATE [1]	MALE LITERACY % [2]	FEMALE LITERACY % [3]	MALE ADVANTAGE % [4]	FEMALE PRIMARY NET ENROLMENT RATE % [5]
Antigua/ Barbuda	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Australia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	97
Bahamas	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	89
Bangladesh	58	47	11	90
Barbados	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	96
Belize	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	97
Botswana	82	82	0	85
Brunei Darussalam	92	82	10	94
Cameroon	77	60	17	n.a.
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	99
Cyprus	99	96	3	99
Dominica	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	79
Gambia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	64
Ghana	71	57	14	71
Grenada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	83
Guyana	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
India	76	53	23	87
Jamaica	80	91	- 11	90
Kenya	78	70	8	76
Kiribati	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	98
Lesotho	74	90	- 16	74
Malawi	79	63	16	94
Maldives	97	97	0	97
Malaysia	89	77	12	100
Malta	90	93	- 3	91
Mauritius	90	84	6	96
Mozambique	57	32	25	73
Namibia	88	87	1	79
Nauru	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	99
Nigeria	79	63	16	59
Pakistan	68	40	28	57
Papua New Guinea	62	53	9	n.a.
St. Kitts & Nevis	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	78
St. Lucia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	97
St. Vincent	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	88
Samoa	98	97	1	91
Seychelles	91	92	- 1	100
Sierra Leone	49	26	23	n.a.
Singapore	95	83	12	n.a.
Solomon Islands	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	61
South Africa	88	87	1	88
Sri Lanka	93	89	4	n.a.
Swaziland	81	78	3	79
Tanzania	79	65	14	97
Tonga	99	99	0	94
Trinidad & Tobago	99	98	1	85
Tuvalu	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Uganda	81	64	17	n.a.
United Kingdom	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	99
Vanuatu	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	86
Zambia	76	60	16	94

Note: The GMR was unable to show literacy statistics for 21 of 53 Commonwealth member countries. However, most of the countries concerned have high rates of female primary net enrolment and may be inferred to have or to be moving towards relatively high rates of adult literacy.

Table 7.2: 2015 Target Adult Literacy Rates: 2015 Projected Adult Literacy Rates

MEMBER STATE [1]	TARGET MALE LITERACY % 2015 [2]	PROJECTED MALE LITERACY % 2015 [3]	TARGET FEMALE LITERACY % 2015 [4]	PROJECTED FEMALE LITERACY % 2015 [5]
Antigua/ Barbuda	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Australia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bahamas	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bangladesh	72	64	63	58
Barbados	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belize	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Botswana	83	87	85	88
Brunei Darussalam	96	98	91	93
Cameroon	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus	99	99	95	98
Dominica	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Gambia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Ghana	n.a.	76	n.a.	66
Grenada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Guyana	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
India	81	81	67	62
Jamaica	n.a.	85	n.a.	94
Kenya	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Kiribati	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lesotho	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Malawi	82	83	67	74
Maldives	98	97	98	97
Malaysia	95	96	89	93
Malta	94	92	94	95
Mauritius	92	92	87	89
Mozambique	n.a.	58	n.a.	41
Namibia	89	90	87	91
Nauru	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nigeria	84	85	72	74
Pakistan	n.a.	73	n.a.	49
Papua New Guinea	n.a.	63	n.a.	60
St. Kitts & Nevis	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
St. Lucia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
St. Vincent	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Samoa	99	99	99	99
Seychelles	96	n.a.	94	n.a.
Sierra Leone	n.a.	58	n.a.	37
Singapore	98	98	92	94
Solomon Islands	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
South Africa	n.a.	92	n.a.	91
Sri Lanka	n.a.	94	n.a.	92
Swaziland	85	n.a.	80	n.a.
Tanzania	85	79	85	70
Tonga	99	99	99	99
Trinidad & Tobago	99	99	98	98
Tuvalu	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Uganda	84	86	73	75
United Kingdom	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Vanuatu	n.a.	85	n.a.	82
Zambia	86	n.a.	78	n.a.

Note: The GMR was unable to show target rates of adult literacy for 32 Commonwealth countries and projected rates for 26 Commonwealth countries.

Table 7.3: Projected Youth (ages 15-24 years) Literacy Rates for 2015

MEMBER STATE [1]	MALE YOUTH LITERACY % 2015 [2]	FEMALE YOUTH LITERACY % 2015 [3]	MALE ADVANTAGE % 2015 [4]
Antigua/Barbuda	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Australia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bahamas	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Bangladesh	72	64	63
Barbados	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belize	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Botswana	83	87	85
Brunei	96	98	91
Darussalam			
Cameroon	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus	99	99	95
Dominica	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Gambia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Ghana	n.a.	76	n.a.
Grenada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Guyana	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
India	81	81	67
Jamaica	n.a.	85	n.a.
Kenya	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Kiribati	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Lesotho	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Malawi	82	83	67
Maldives	98	97	98
Malaysia	95	96	89
Malta	94	92	94
Mauritius	92	92	87
Mozambique	n.a.	58	n.a.
Namibia	89	90	87
Nauru	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
New Zealand	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Nigeria	84	85	72
Pakistan	n.a.	73	n.a.
Papua New Guinea	n.a.	63	n.a.
St. Kitts & Nevis	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
St. Lucia	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
St. Vincent	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Samoa	99	99	99
Seychelles	96	n.a.	94
Sierra Leone	n.a.	58	n.a.
Singapore	98	98	92
Solomon Islands	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
South Africa	n.a.	92	n.a.
Sri Lanka	n.a.	94	n.a.
Swaziland	85	n.a.	80
Tanzania	85	79	85
Tonga	99	99	99
Trinidad & Tobago	99	99	98
Tuvalu	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Uganda	84	86	73
United Kingdom	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Vanuatu	n.a.	85	n.a.
Zambia	86	n.a.	78

Note: The GMR is unable to give projected rates of youth literacy for 26 Commonwealth countries. In 13 countries, females are expected to have higher rates of literacy than males..

two levels of each type of literacy assessed. In terms of the study then, more than 40 per cent of their peoples were unable adequately to meet the demands of everyday life and work. Two conclusions relevant to the theme of 17 CCEM, 'Towards and beyond global goals and targets', suggest themselves.

One is the real importance of the second component of the literacy goal, "equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults". Without continuing education, few adults who currently operate at Levels 1 and 2 will be able to raise their skills to a fully operational level. In other words, they – and most likely their families - will remain marginalised and at risk of falling into a disadvantaged underclass.

Second, any country that aspires to be successful participant in the globalised information age - not only the nine Commonwealth countries with annual per capita incomes above \$20,000⁴ - will need to move well beyond universal literacy and universal primary completion. Universal secondary education needs to be a goal, too, along with post-secondary and lifelong education and training.

Commonwealth collaboration on literacy

The facts shown in the boxes and by the OECD studies suggest that there should indeed be much co-operation between Commonwealth members, particularly as the majority in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia do have numbers of literacy programmes run both by the state, often as national programmes, and by non-governmental organisations on more localised bases.

Bilateral co-operation

However, on the bilateral level, the Global Monitoring Report for 2006, "Literacy for Life", suggests that only three of the Commonwealth's nine higher-income members include literacy in their bilateral co-operation programmes⁵. This appears to be in line with the GMR observation, "From these limited data sets it is clear that literacy in the broad policy sense of literate societies is not widely embraced by donor agencies... Whatever the reason, the fact that no agency surveyed could quote with confidence

⁴ Per capita incomes measured as 'purchasing power parity' – GMR 2009, pp.261-267.

⁵ UNESCO, 2005, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006: Literacy for Life, Paris, p.243



a single figure to illustrate its level of funding indicates the low priority assigned to literacy in aid budgets.” (p. 244). Somewhat offsetting that remark, the report does note that one reason for the difficulty in identifying specific work in adult literacy is that it is often just one component in programmes aiming to improve, for example, livelihood skills or health and hygiene practices.

As far as can be ascertained, at least Canada and the UK continue to include adult literacy as part of their bilateral co-operation. Canada has in the past financed several literacy projects in other Commonwealth countries, although it appears to have focused recently on the non-Commonwealth countries of Egypt and Senegal, with only a small capacity-building project in the Inhambane province of Mozambique that enrolled 501 adults, 430 of them women, in adult literacy classes. The UK also continues its long standing support for adult literacy in several countries, India, Kenya, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda among them.

A feature of bilateral co-operation in adult literacy is the widespread use by donors and their partner governments of non-governmental organisations, both local and international, to organise and deliver literacy instruction in particular localities. A notable example is ActionAid, which pioneered the pedagogical strategy known as REFLECT, in Bangladesh and Uganda among other countries, and now partners local organisations in several more.

Multilateral co-operation

On the multilateral level, the very restricted resources of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation have constrained them to focus on helping to achieve only the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This necessitates a lower priority for those of the Dakar Declaration on Education for All (EFA). Targets 3 and 4 of the MDG envisage Universal Primary Completion and the elimination of gender disparity at all levels of education by 2015. They reflect only the second and fifth EFA goals and do not include the fourth EFA goal of achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015. (The further importance of the fourth goal is that it goes on to emphasise literacy for women and to include “equitable

access to basic and continuing education for all adults”).)

South-South co-operation

Co-operation between Commonwealth countries on what is commonly called a ‘south-south’ basis is frequent, for most countries, e.g. Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya or Nigeria, have had decades of experience in organising adult literacy programmes and can certainly be of use to each other. However, such co-operation tends to be arranged through channels like the Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE), the German Adult Education Association through its Institute for International Co-operation or UNESCO, which is of course the lead institution for working towards the EFA goals.

Chapter 8: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION

Kabir Shaikh

Introduction

Science, technology, mathematics, and the more recently added component of engineering (STEM), are key aspects of education, directly impacting on the economic wellbeing and wealth creation of a nation. The link between the number of technologists and researchers a country produces per million of its population and its economic affluence is well documented by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.¹ These subjects are also highly relevant to such global issues as food production, environment, HIV/AIDS and non-communicable diseases, water supply, climate change, alternative sources of energy; and the growing influence of information and communication technology on the lives of ordinary humans. This necessitates a much closer examination of how these curriculum areas can best be integrated into a holistic learning experience in school education. Reflecting these concerns, STEM education has been a recurring concern of Commonwealth Ministers of Education at their triennial conferences.

While STEM education provides countries with a necessary tool for finding a satisfactory solution to these problems, it is also the case that ordinary citizens need a minimum basic literacy in STEM to conduct their daily lives in a much more efficient, responsible, fulfilling and informed way. STEM education is important both in the economic, industrial and social development of the nation and in the sustainability of such development. Commonwealth countries realise that within a global context their capability can only be maintained through a strong cadre of well qualified, creative and imaginative scientists, technologists, mathematicians and engineers.

Within STEM education science and mathematics provide fundamental areas of knowledge, while technology and engineering deal with the application of basic knowledge to solving human and social problems. It is important to consider STEM education as an integrated programme of study. Learning about the relevance of science, technology and mathematics for sustainable human development is important for all children, and should be considered basic to their education from the earliest stages of schooling. Sustainable development requires more active

engagement and participation by everyone in the setting of science agendas and the use of findings.² Education in science and technology is fundamental to develop knowledge-action linkage. The local environment provides rich resources, a well-equipped laboratory and a valuable stimulus for teaching and learning of science. Sophisticated equipment and apparatus is not required at the elementary level, but teachers need adequate initial training, and access to in-service training throughout their working lives for their continued professional development to ensure that the environment is judiciously used. The use of this approach in teaching and learning would develop and enhance the natural curiosity of young people about the world around them and the way science works.

The idea that STEM should be an essential part of the learning of a child in school and that it should be given a high priority in secondary and higher education is no longer a contentious issue but how best this could be achieved within the limitations of human, material, institutional and intellectual resources continues to be a major challenge. Within a democratic framework of governments it is essential that the people at large have sufficient understanding of the role and importance of STEM in education so that they can engage in and influence the debate around resources for education, and STEM education in particular.

The Commonwealth Secretariat, through its education programmes, has been active over the years in initiating and promoting projects to assist the development of STEM education in member countries. These included teacher education, use of local resources in teaching and learning of STEM, gender equality, popularising science and technology, and scientific and technological literacy. The Commonwealth Secretariat provided advocacy and advice to member countries on the role of science and technology, and also supported curriculum development in these areas. Activity-based learning of science and technology was another important thematic area on which the Commonwealth Secretariat worked with member countries, helping them to incorporate that strategy in the training of teachers. The programmes of science and technology

¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Science and Technology Statistics, Tables 19 and 22 (data for 2010)*.

² V. Goel, "Science and Technology for Sustainable Development", in *Commonwealth Education Partnership 2004*, ed. Commonwealth Secretariat, 142-148 (London, The Stationery Office, 2003).

education in the Commonwealth also focused on the role of out-of-school activities in learning these subjects, with an emphasis on the role of museums, and on promoting awareness of the science and technology dimension of everyday activities at home and in the playground.

The challenges

Much has been achieved by the Commonwealth countries in STEM education individually and collectively both on their own initiative, and with the support and involvement of external agencies, including the Commonwealth Secretariat. However, there are major challenges to overcome in a number of Commonwealth countries, and small states in particular. These challenges include the following:

(1) STEM Curriculum Design

This particular problem appears to be global. Poor curriculum design has been a key factor in switching off girls from the STEM curriculum. The STEM curriculum has to be broad enough to provide access for the many but at the same time should be sufficiently challenging and stimulating to those who would pursue it academically to higher levels. STEM curriculum with breadth, balance, cohesion and above all a relevance to daily lives of the learners means that it has to be planned and delivered in a localised context by local educators with locally available resources, materials and equipment.

(2) Delivering STEM Curriculum

By its very nature the STEM curriculum requires a focus on practical aspects of learning. This has major resource implications for materials, equipment and laboratories which restrict possibilities for expansion. The image of science as an elite subject accessible only to brighter students, and also as a more difficult subject, has discouraged take-up by average students and by girls. This has been a major failure on the part of curriculum designers. It is a misconception that an effective STEM curriculum at primary or early secondary level can only be delivered with a laboratory or sophisticated scientific equipment. There are numerous examples within the Commonwealth of creative and imaginative teachers enhancing STEM teaching and learning by designing low-cost equipment, by using locally available materials and by capitalising on the school's immediate natural environment.

(3) STEM specialist teachers

The competence, knowledge base and enthusiasm of teachers remain the most influential factors in children's learning generally; and shortfalls in the quality, qualifications and number of specialist teachers is a major obstacle to provision of a STEM curriculum for all, even at primary school level. In many Commonwealth countries there is a major gap between the number of specialist teachers available and the numbers required. The STEM curriculum is often being delivered by teachers who are unqualified or under-qualified to teach these subjects. Mass programmes of education and training of STEM teachers are needed.

In some countries the supply of STEM teachers has been adversely affected by the strength of international demand for these skills, and a consequent 'brain drain' of qualified and experienced personnel. Reflecting these concerns, in its meeting in April 2012 the Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration, proposed that a study should be undertaken of the extent to which the global demand for mathematics, science and technology teachers impacts on teacher migration flows and what research, policies or activities are being undertaken by member countries to protect and encourage the supply of such teachers, e.g. through pre- or in-service training, special incentives etc.

(4) Girls in STEM education

In Commonwealth countries in particular, there is a huge gender gap in the field of STEM and consequently a deficit in the wealth creation process and a missed opportunity for capitalising on nearly half of the active, intelligent and creative work force. Gender bias in the curriculum as well as in the teaching of these subjects remains an ongoing challenge.

Various studies have indicated poor enrolment and achievement of girls in STEM in many Commonwealth countries. Table 8.1 gives some general figures for girls' enrolment in selected countries: the proportion taking STEM courses is much lower.

This issue was first raised at the 13th Conference of Commonwealth Ministers of Education in 1997 in Botswana and recommendations were made. Since then, many countries have integrated gender issues into

their STEM curricula. More effort is still needed to draw content from, and relate it to, the lives of girls. Women in developing countries are a repository of knowledge about indigenous technologies and they should be encouraged to relate their local knowledge and experiences to science and technology in the school curricula. There have been, however, some encouraging signs. In Ghana, for example, the Government has adopted the Science and Technology Clinic for Girls programme aimed at giving girls more access to science and technology education and targeted at girls in secondary schools. In Botswana, there has been a Science and Technology Road Show for Girls.

Table 8.1: Gender parity indices^a for primary and secondary education gross enrolment rates in selected Commonwealth countries, 2010

Country	Primary	Secondary
Cameroon	86	83
India	na	92
Malawi	104	91
Mozambique	90	82
Nigeria	91	88
Pakistan	82	76

^aThe gender parity index is measured as a quotient with the female gross enrolment rate as the numerator and the male rate as the denominator. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics data.

Much work has been undertaken to investigate issues related to STEM education, girls in STEM in particular and the overall enthusiasm for STEM of its potential students and career aspirants. The conclusions are rather straightforward but the solutions pose major challenges:

- To gain the maximum benefits for personal, social and economic development that science and technology can bring, a key principle is that all children should have access to the STEM curriculum. STEM education and STEM careers need to be made more attractive and accessible to all students, girls in particular.
- The content, approach and delivery of STEM education has to change radically. The application of technology should lead

into science and mathematics rather than the other way round. This process should facilitate the understanding and manipulation of basic ideas, a complete reverse of the process that has been used hitherto. It requires development of an education technology geared to the needs of educators and education providers.

- The possibility of STEM for ALL and beyond secondary level needs some careful but serious consideration.

It is important to note that STEM for All beyond the secondary level will require a massive increase in the number of STEM-trained teachers and their quality. It also follows that, if successful, this would lead to an increased demand for STEM graduate places in higher education establishments. In that sense this is a desirable but unrealistic objective within the short term. However, making the curriculum more accessible, and enhancing the effective use of educational technology, are goals which can be achieved within a shorter time scale.

STEM education within a traditional framework of education can be resource-intensive at the tertiary level. One way to address this issue is for the education sector to consider how best to harness the opportunities created by ICT and the venture of open and distance learning. All other sectors – the media, advertising, industry, agriculture, health – have capitalised on the technology revolution, and education should follow their lead.

Commonwealth Day 2010: the theme of “Science, Technology and Society”

Recognising the importance of science and technology in socio-economic development, the Commonwealth Secretariat selected “Science, Technology and Society” (a popular approach to science curriculum) as the theme of Commonwealth Day in 2010 with the hope that this would help stimulate new partnerships, networks, research collaboration and approaches to the teaching of science.

As a part of celebration of Commonwealth Day in Malta, a survey was conducted about the

Box 8.1 Children's perceptions of science and technology in Malta

Boy (aged 14): "We have made a lot of improvements thanks to science and technology but there is more to come because this is something ongoing. New inventions are being made right now. I wish I could invent something one day that would be beneficial for the whole world."

Girl (aged 14): "Science and technology are ways to explain the universe and the world around us. With these we can find out how the world has been shaped and also provide modern technologies that make our lives better. All this gives us great benefits and a higher standard of living. Unfortunately it also provides pollution with all the modern technology we have nowadays all this is getting destroyed and a better world is being created for our future."

Source: CASTME Newsletter (May/June, 2010)

perception of science and technology amongst children. Responses varied considerably. Two typical examples from the hundreds of replies are shown in Box 8.1.

In Mauritius five activities were carried out as part of Commonwealth Day celebrations, as shown in Box 8.2. In Bangladesh, to demonstrate the role of everyday items in learning science and technology hands on activities were organised for children and mothers. This generated lots of interest and enthusiasm especially amongst mothers, a significant development since mothers can play an important role in motivating their children to learn science and technology. The mothers who never had a single certificate were awarded a certificate of participation by the Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology and Mathematics Educators (CASTME).

Box 8.2 Commonwealth Day activities in Mauritius, 2010

1. An Innovative Primary School Teacher (IPST)
Primary school teachers who demonstrated exceptional qualities in teaching science or mathematics at primary level received awards.
2. A competition for primary school pupils at upper primary level (Standards V and VI) involved groups of four pupils (two boys and two girls) thoroughly investigating a school compound problem related to any one of the following:
 - Health issues (e.g., hygiene, nutrition, diseases, dental care)
 - The immediate environment – pollution, minimizing wastage
 - Safety
 - Drinking water
 - Energy-saving measures
3. A Physics Olympiad and a Biology Olympiad in conjunction with science subject teaching associations.
4. A Quiz Competition for Students of Form IV on science, mathematics and technology using mobile phones.
5. Production of short films to illustrate science and technology concepts.

Source: CASTME Newsletter (May/June 2010)

The challenge of achieving STEM for all within a "Universal Basic Education for All" agenda.

The challenge of achieving universal basic education for their populations often outweighs consideration of the wider STEM curriculum at primary level for many Commonwealth countries. UNESCO emphasised the importance of developing broadly-based, activity-centred curricula which foster the key dispositions for learning science – curiosity, willingness to experiment and to take risks with thinking. Dispositions for learning are developed in the early years of schooling, and the scientific way of thinking needs to be fostered in primary as well as in secondary school programmes. Science education is well understood, but science in itself does not solve problems. A problem solving approach to technology education, focused on working out ways to address human needs through the development of products and systems, fosters dispositions of inventiveness and ingenuity, and often leads to scientific breakthroughs.

An additional problem being faced by some Commonwealth countries is declining interest in learning science and technology on the part of young people, since these subjects do not offer many jobs or career progression opportunities. This is attributable to lack of infrastructure for scientific research and industrial development in those countries.

Although limited, the progress towards universal primary education in many Commonwealth

countries has now created the necessity for increased progression into secondary education, where STEM (or equivalent subjects) is treated as a specialised curriculum area. The need to meet the added demand for STEM in the secondary phase is a highly resource-intensive exercise in terms of both human and material resources, and could undermine the success of EFA beyond the primary phase. The secondary phase is a necessary step between basic education and the world of work as well as higher education. Weaknesses in the planning and resource level for STEM in this phase of education can jeopardise the key objective of seeking more scientists and technologists.

Partnerships and links across the Commonwealth

Because science, technology and mathematics are universal subjects with curriculum content that is similar in many countries, there is considerable scope to establish links and partnerships among individual schools across the Commonwealth, facilitating joint project work. Several such links have been established on a north-south, as well as south-south and north-north, basis.

An international education programme that aims to link individual schools worldwide with each other directly is “Science across the World”.³ Students work in small groups on one of a range of topics such as drinking water, climate change, migration, domestic waste. Topics involve enquiry and analysis – but with a minimum of specialist equipment. There is always discussion and debate after the activities have been completed. The website and print materials are in various languages, and this aspect has been shown to be of considerable value in language teaching especially in those schools working in a bilingual context. Foreign language teachers are working with colleagues teaching science to support the programme.

Education at tertiary and university levels is expanding rapidly in the developing world. At the same time, many scholars and students from developing countries choose to study at universities abroad, where they have access to the latest technologies for investigation, and can work in teams involved in cutting-edge research. An important mechanism for facilitating this

in the Commonwealth is the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, described in Chapter 3. Science and technology subjects have been prominent in UK awards, which account for two-thirds of all CSFP awards – about 30 per cent of UK awards have been in science and engineering, and another 20 per cent in health disciplines.

The developmental work which the Commonwealth does in education, including STEM education, is mandated by the Commonwealth Ministers of Education in their triennial Conferences. A review of the role of the Commonwealth in STEM education over 40 years has been provided by Goel.⁴ He shows that teacher education has been continuously identified as one of the key issues for STEM education in the Commonwealth. This remains true, but the content of and approach to teacher training has to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that advantage is taken of the most up-to-date research findings. Similarly the production of quality learning resource materials and developing the capability of teachers to produce contextual materials continue to be important in improving the quality of science teaching in schools.

Goel noted that another area which needs development in the Commonwealth is technology education. A first task is to address the lack of clarity on what technology education includes, since different countries use different definitions. There is considerable potential for sharing experiences as a way of helping countries to develop their policies on technology education.

The major challenge of creating a well qualified and competent STEM teaching workforce in the required numbers and within the necessary time frame cannot be fully addressed without considering the use of open and distance learning, and harnessing the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) for this purpose, as advocated by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). COL has been active in producing teaching and learning resources for STEM education as well as facilitating training and in-service support for teachers through open and distance learning. Through its STAMP 2000+ Project, COL has produced 27 teaching and learning modules in science, mathematics

³ <http://www.scienceacross.org>.

⁴ V. Goel, “The Road from Oxford to Halifax: Snapshots of Science, Technology and Mathematics Education”, in *Education in the Commonwealth: the First 40 Years: From Oxford to Halifax and Beyond*, ed. L. Bown, 95-110 (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2003).



and technology for upper primary and junior secondary education.⁵

Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology and Mathematics Educators

A relevant organisation is the Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology and Mathematics Educators (CASTME), which was established in 1974 as an NGO recognised by the Commonwealth Secretariat and later gained accredited status with the Commonwealth. It has members throughout the Commonwealth and has regional branches in Africa, Asia and Europe. Its aims are to share best practices in STEM education, to demonstrate the relevance of STEM to local environments, and to promote the relationship between science, technology and mathematics, especially at school level. CASTME's mission in the Commonwealth is to promote the teaching of STEM in a social and locally relevant context and to ensure that access to such teaching is universally available.

CASTME annually makes awards to individual teachers who develop local projects that demonstrate engagement with locally relevant science technology and mathematics programmes, and publicises their achievements through the CASTME Journal and website. These awards are now well established and prestigious. They have been supported by grants from the Commonwealth Foundation, as indeed has most of CASTME's work. Recent awardees have included a team from Malaysia producing primary education textbooks dealing with sustainability issues, and printed in a range of local languages; an innovative project in the Caribbean, in which young women themselves researched and reported to each other about the risks of HIV/AIDS; a fish-farming project for students with special educational needs in Kenya; and a project to introduce junior secondary students to the science of agriculture through the development of a school farm, in Ghana. Celebrating the creativity and skill of these teachers underpins the importance of developing the teaching workforce as a whole, and inspires other teachers to emulate their achievements.

Papers which address the key aspects of CASTME's aims, and the winning CASTME

⁵ <http://www.col.org/resources/crsMaterials/Pages/STAMP.aspx>.

⁶ <http://www.castme.org>.

Awards entries, are published in the CASTME Journal, which is sent to all individual members of the Association and to libraries in many parts of the Commonwealth. Information about CASTME, including its current activities and projects, some of which are described above, may be found at the CASTME website.⁶

Conclusion

Education continues to be a major pre-occupation globally and within the Commonwealth. The place of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum within the educational provision of a country goes well beyond mere knowledge acquisition. It is now both an economic and social necessity, for it is through its cadre of STEM professionals that a country can address the economic, industrial, and environmental challenges of development and sustainability, so helping to assure the social, societal and democratic wellbeing of its people.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has played a small but significant role in facilitating, developing and supporting initiatives to enhance STEM education in the Commonwealth. Much still remains to be done as this chapter has made clear.

Chapter 9: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY

Peter Williams

Introduction

The teacher's role in education is central. After the learners, teachers are the most important actors in the education process. Excellent teachers do more than teach curriculum content: they inspire and enthuse their pupils and serve as role models in terms of attitudes and social relationships. If schools, colleges and universities - and non-formal learning programmes - are to achieve their educational aims, there must be effective systems to select, prepare, deploy, manage and support teachers, and to help them develop their professional skills over a working lifetime.

The Education for All targets adopted at Dakar in 2000 recognise that enrolment in school does not itself ensure good education. There must be adequate quality of provision for effective learning to occur. This requires measures to increase teacher supply and improve the quality and status of the teaching force. The Commonwealth Secretariat, with the endorsement of Ministers at I6CCEM, has made the teaching profession a central focus of its work on the Millennium Development Goals in education.

Teachers have a high profile in Commonwealth activity. Recent highlights are the adoption of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol in 2004, the inclusion of a Teachers' Forum at the ministerial conferences in Cape Town, Kuala Lumpur and Mauritius and the formal launch of the Commonwealth Teachers' Group in Cape Town in 2006.

The Commonwealth's focus on teachers reflects a conscious decision to make teacher development and the mobility of teachers the centrepiece of its work on improving education quality. There are two main thrusts:

- Support for strengthening the teacher profession at national level, addressed in the next three sections of this chapter. Here the Commonwealth Secretariat, especially as convenor of the ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession in Africa, and the Commonwealth of Learning have focused on measures for development and support of teachers. At tertiary level the Association of Commonwealth Universities is particularly active.

- International mobility of teachers and the opportunities and challenges that this presents: the subject matter of later sections of the chapter. The Secretariat's work on the Teacher Recruitment Protocol and on international recognition of teacher qualifications, and the activities of civil society bodies, have been prominent in this regard.

The Commonwealth has a long record of activity in this area. Teacher exchanges among Commonwealth countries, formerly through the League for Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers and now in more attenuated form under the auspices of the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council, have been taking place for a century. Staff development for universities was one of the main components of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), launched in 1959. For twenty years after the first Commonwealth Education Conference in Oxford in 1959, there was a Commonwealth Bursary Scheme, funded by Britain, for education and training of teachers: and the number of awards under this peaked at 500 annually. One of the first of the Commonwealth specialist education conferences held in the 1960s and 1970s was on the theme of Teacher Education in a Changing Society (Nairobi, 1968).

The Commonwealth has certain natural advantages in serving as a forum to address international issues affecting teachers, to facilitate productive exchanges of experience, and to launch co-operative activity. The shared use of English and the many commonalities in member countries' education systems make dialogue especially easy, and provide a strong basis for fruitful exchange of experience and sharing of good practice. Common features include, for example, similarities in school organisation and curriculum, structures of teacher employment, qualifications and examination systems, boards of governors and school committees, and the role of inspectorates.

Teacher development, support and management

The last half-century has seen impressive growth in education enrolment in Commonwealth countries and the teacher force has had to expand to keep pace. In some member states class sizes have fallen: a change made possible by

prospering economies. Elsewhere, however, the teacher-pupil ratio has worsened considerably: output from the training colleges has lagged behind growing requirements and there has been heavy wastage of serving teachers, reflecting a response to poor working conditions and the incidence of life-threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS.

The educational qualifications of teachers have markedly improved in this 50-year period, reflecting the expanded provision of secondary and tertiary education. Yet the average quality of teachers has not always risen commensurately. The prescribed length of professional preparation has been reduced in some countries in response to budget cuts or in an attempt to raise teacher output rapidly. It has become more difficult to recruit “the brightest and best” to teaching careers, reflecting a fall in the status and remuneration of teachers relative to other professionals. Another factor is that the teacher’s job has become more complex and stressful in the face of new expectations of schools on the part of society and because of social and technological change.

The Secretariat responded to these critical circumstances by embarking in the 1980s, in partnership with Southern African countries, on a pioneering programme to address issues of teacher management and support, starting with the reform of teacher record systems operated by ministries of education and their staffing sections, their regional and district offices, teaching service commissions, and the payroll authorities. A series of country-led workshops, study visits and collaborative activity to produce training materials took place and the range of countries participating gradually expanded.

In the light of this it was natural that, when the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) was formed, it should fall to the Secretariat to take on in 1993 the role of convenor of the ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession, a responsibility it has continued to perform for the past 20 years. The range of issues tackled by the Working Group has grown to include, for example, questions of gender, coping with HIV/AIDS, and questions of teacher supply and training. The geographical coverage has also broadened out to include many more Sub-Saharan African countries, in

the East and West as well as the South; and the Secretariat has on its own initiative shared the fruits of this work with ministries in other Commonwealth regions.

The essence of the ADEA Working Group activities is that they are country-led and highly participatory. This involves convening working groups, normally at sub-regional level, for the exchange of experience about the policies and procedures of member countries in key areas affecting teachers, and for consideration of practical measures of improvement and reform. Topics addressed include management of the teaching profession, staffing of schools and teacher deployment, teachers working conditions, teacher training and opportunities for continuing professional development, support services for teachers. In addition to seminars, training workshops and observation visits, there have been writing workshops to produce practically-oriented resource materials.

Outcomes of this ADEA work have been a heightened awareness of the central role of teachers in education development and of the need to nurture and support teachers, and an increase in the capacity and confidence of ministry professionals dealing with them. Specific outputs have included a series of well-regarded published resource books and manuals on training of head teachers, inspection and, more recently, training for multi-grade teaching.

Separately from its ADEA work, the Commonwealth Secretariat has commissioned reviews of teacher deployment practices and policies in different member states across the Commonwealth and most recently a study of the feminisation of the teaching profession in selected countries.

New approaches in teacher training and CPD

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) targets in education will require a massive expansion of enrolments, both to keep up with population growth and to raise enrolment rates to 100% of the primary school-age population. As noted in Chapter 4, it has been calculated that Africa alone will require two million more teachers by 2015. The prospects of

conventional training colleges being able to meet this requirement for newly trained teachers, as well as the continuing professional development (CPD) needs of those in service, seem remote.

One approach to solving this crisis is to increase the use of distance learning in training teachers. If programmes operated wholly or partially through the learning-at-a-distance mode, this could contribute to alleviating shortages in two ways: first by eliminating or reducing the time and expense invested in attendance on conventional college-based courses, and second by making trainee teachers available earlier for service in school classrooms. Where distance learning uses high-quality self-instructional materials and incorporates well-designed systems of learner support it can potentially make an important contribution to reducing the deficit. Its learner-friendliness is one of its most attractive features. Trainees can complete most of the programme at a time, place and pace chosen by themselves to suit their personal circumstances and to fit in with their particular responsibilities: characteristics that are especially helpful to female aspirants to the teaching profession. The systematic approach to teacher and learning that is so necessary in distance education, if it is effectively implemented, provides teachers with an example of good practice.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the Commonwealth agency for distance education co-operation, has been active in assisting development of such approaches. Capacity-building in distance learning has been undertaken in The Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, India, Lesotho, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. Working with experts and practitioners from Commonwealth countries in Africa and Asia, COL has produced a package of Commonwealth quality indicators and quality-assurance materials for teacher education. It also engages with Commonwealth member states in devising strategies and policies for using distance education in teacher training systems, and helping them to incorporate the use of ICTs in their programmes.

Staff development at tertiary level

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP), launched in 1959 and discussed

in Chapter 3 of this volume, has provided opportunities to younger men and women to pursue advanced-level studies, normally leading to a higher degree. It was always expected that some of the main beneficiaries would be the newly developing universities and tertiary colleges in Commonwealth developing countries that were in urgent need of academic staff. A relatively high proportion of those award holders who have pursued research degrees have gone on to take up academic careers.

As well as hosting the UK Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, and administering other awards programmes, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) runs a number of staff development programmes. These include leadership workshops for university vice-chancellors and gender capacity-building training workshops to assist women academics to advance their careers (see Chapter 6 on gender). The ACU also runs a staff recruitment service for its 500 member institutions. In 2006 it published a research report, based on a 2005 survey of nearly 130 Commonwealth universities, on trends in academic recruitment and retention.

The Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA), based in Nairobi, Kenya, has its own staff development programme. Workshop themes have included "Prevention of HIV/AIDS", and "Increasing Women's Participation in TVET Activities".

Teacher mobility in the Commonwealth

International teacher mobility has great value. It can benefit individual teachers and the education systems to which mobile teachers bring international experience. Teacher interchange helps to strengthen the bonds between Commonwealth countries. There is the potential to plan such exchange in a better and more purposeful way, as a form of professional development for teachers and as a means of strengthening and enriching education systems. It is also important to ensure that teachers who take assignments in another country are treated fairly. This applies to all teachers but especially those who have been induced to serve abroad through active recruitment campaigns.

Teachers seek work abroad for a variety of reasons. These include a desire to travel, a quest for professional experience, and the search for higher salaries or better conditions of service. However 'push' and 'pull' factors are also at work between different education systems. Large-scale out-migration of teachers often reflects poor morale in the teaching force of their home country. Teachers may perceive terms and conditions of service as unfavourable, both absolutely and relatively to what exists abroad. Countries that are concerned about large-scale teacher emigration have a responsibility to review their own domestic arrangements for recruiting, retaining and remunerating teachers and offering them a satisfying professional life.

The strong family and other ties between Commonwealth countries, and long traditions of professional migration, tend to encourage mobility. Information on teacher mobility within the Commonwealth is however deficient and most Commonwealth countries have poor data on the composition of their teaching force by nationality and on international inflow and outflow. The steps they might take to collect, analyse and disseminate such data has been the subject of recent discussion between the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, based on the Secretariat's Standard Reporting Form for collating data on teacher migration.

Commonwealth teacher mobility is of course multi-directional, major variants being:

1. Between developing countries, e.g. from India to Eastern and Southern Africa, or Guyana to Trinidad and Tobago. Sometimes these flows are parts of technical and cultural co-operation arrangements, e.g. from Nigeria to Namibia at the time of the latter's Independence.
2. Between industrialised countries, e.g. Australia to Britain.
3. From industrialised to developing countries via voluntary organisations and technical co-operation arrangements, e.g. from Canada to West Africa.
4. From developing countries to industrialised ones, e.g. Tongans to New Zealand or Jamaicans to UK.

National circumstances differ. In certain South Pacific countries, for example, there is a surplus of teachers and the authorities may look benignly on efforts to offer them employment abroad, especially if emigrant teachers remit part of their salaries back home. Even then pockets of specific shortage may exist within an overall situation of surplus. Elsewhere, however, teacher emigration may exacerbate an already existing shortage and so intensify the threat of missing national and international targets like the MDGs. It was such situations that prompted the drawing up of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol.

Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP)

The Protocol was signed in 2004,¹ following a lengthy process of discussion and negotiation. It was triggered by a dual set of concerns. First, some developing countries were being deliberately targeted by industrialised countries, to make good their own teacher shortages. This caused 'brain drain' of teachers, often in specialised science and mathematics subjects, who had been expensively trained at local taxpayers' expense. Small island states in particular found it hard to make good the loss suffered. Second, there was real concern that some of those employed abroad through specialised recruitment agencies experienced unfair or discriminatory treatment in their new posts.

The Protocol is a voluntary agreement, but has a certain moral force. It addresses 'organised' recruitment by countries and agencies, not the 'informal' flows of teachers who make individual arrangements to work abroad. It provides that recruiting and source countries should consult together about intentions to recruit and agree on mutually acceptable measures to avoid harmful impact on the source country. Principles for an acceptable recruitment process are laid down (full consultation, avoiding recruitment in the middle of the school year, etc.) and those recruiting countries using the services of recruiting agencies are enjoined to maintain a list of approved agencies and a formal recognition system to ensure they conform with good practice.

The Protocol also sets out the responsibilities and rights of source countries. It is their duty

¹ Commonwealth Education Ministers, *Protocol for the Recruitment of Commonwealth Teachers* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004).

to devise strategies that will make teaching attractive in their country and to ensure an adequate supply of teachers in areas of strategic importance. They should make known the categories of teachers whose recruitment they will not support. The Protocol recognises that in the last resort, when avenues of discussion and negotiation have been exhausted, source countries can withhold permission for organised teacher recruitment by international recruiters to take place in its country.

Early indications are that the Protocol has been successful in drawing international attention to the issue and in mitigating the problem for small Commonwealth states somewhat. It has been widely welcomed in the international community as a model instrument, which could usefully be adapted and adopted for use elsewhere.

In the latest period since 17CCEM the implementation of the Protocol has been overseen by a Commonwealth advisory committee of up to a dozen members drawn from different Commonwealth regions and including teachers' representatives. This has met each year since 2010.

To facilitate agreements between countries, the Commonwealth Secretariat has recently developed a model Memorandum of Understanding for the Recruitment of Migrant Teachers, which countries can freely adapt to their circumstances.

Recognition for migrant teachers

A problem faced by migrant teachers, and by education systems wishing to employ them, is the difficulty of establishing the 'value' of the qualification they hold in comparative terms. In a globalising world this issue is encountered in almost every sphere of the international employment market for professionals. It has to be recognised that to the extent the problem can be solved for Commonwealth teachers, the easier migration becomes and the greater is the danger of 'brain drain' of qualified teachers. This would make the Protocol described above even more important - even accepting that its provisions are confined to the 'managed' element of Commonwealth teacher mobility.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has been addressing this issue with the help of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) which commissioned a report for consideration by Ministers in Cape Town.² The report makes a key distinction between the comparability of qualifications and their formal equivalence, and recommends that the Commonwealth should focus initially on trying to improve the recognition and transferability of teacher qualifications through establishing international comparability. It also distinguishes between academic recognition of qualifications for entry into university courses etc., and professional recognition giving legal employment status.

The SAQA report suggests that mechanisms in the form of 'competent recognition authorities' are needed at national level in each of these domains. It recommends that an Association of Commonwealth Qualifications Authorities, and a Commonwealth Forum of Professional Teacher Councils could usefully be established. It "argues strongly for a Commonwealth-wide approach to the recognition and transferability of teacher professional registration" and recommends that a Commonwealth standard for professional registration status be developed.

In 2009, at the request of the Commonwealth Steering Group on Teacher Qualifications, SAQA completed a further report on the issue of recognition of qualifications.³ More recently, the Commonwealth Secretariat has been exploring the possibility of working with COL, IOM, ILO and the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa to adapt COL's Transitional Qualifications Framework for use in mechanisms which will support the implementation of the African Union's emerging teacher recruitment protocol for Africa. It has also been working with governments on the role and status of refugee teachers in education in emergencies, aiming to reduce the formal and non-formal institutional barriers faced by teachers forced to migrate across a border.

² SAQA, *The recognition of teacher qualifications and professional registration status across Commonwealth member states* (Pretoria: SAQA, 2007).

³ SAQA, *Recognition of Teacher Qualifications in the Commonwealth* (Pretoria: SAQA, 2009).

Commonwealth associations of teachers

The staff development activities of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa at tertiary level have been mentioned above. Among Commonwealth civil-society teacher organisations at school level, three prominent ones are mentioned here.

(1) The Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG)

CTG operates under the auspices of Education International and was formally launched in Cape Town in December 2006 at the Teachers' Forum, of which it was the convenor. The CTG played a major role in bringing the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol to fruition and one of its member associations, the National Union of Teachers in the UK, hosted the Commonwealth meeting that adopted the Protocol, a review meeting in 2009 and the meetings of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee.

CTG works with other bodies to promote greater contact between Commonwealth teachers, and to develop links supporting professional development activities. It also aims to promote the interests of teachers and education with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Commonwealth bodies. It acts as convenor of the Teachers' Forums that are held in the wings of triennial conferences of education ministers.

(2) The League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers (LECT)

LECT, founded in 1901 and merged in 2007 with the CfBT Education Trust, was active in providing opportunities for teacher professional development with an international dimension. The major activities were as follows:

- LECT co-ordinated the Commonwealth Teacher Exchange Programme, supporting post-to-post exchange between UK teachers and Commonwealth colleagues – mainly from Australia, Canada and New Zealand - for a period of one year.

- Under the Teachers International Professional Development Programme (TIPD), through a contract from the UK's former Department for Children, Schools and Families, LECT provided 300 places for teachers from England to participate in a local authority-based programme of themed study visits abroad. Themes included citizenship education, social inclusion, involving and supporting parents, and raising achievement.
- Short week-long themed international group visits for UK teachers to overseas destinations were offered.
- LECT co-ordinated the Leadership in Education Programme under the Commonwealth Professional Fellowships Programme within the UK's Commonwealth Scholarships provision. This enabled a few mid-career professionals from Commonwealth developing countries to spend two months on professional development attachments in the UK.

The League had to be dissolved, however, in 2011 when, as part of UK budget cuts, the government funding for the last three of these programmes was withdrawn. However, the Commonwealth Teacher Exchange Programme (from which New Zealand has now withdrawn) continues under the management of the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC).

(3) The Commonwealth Association of Science, Mathematics and Technology Educators (CASTME)

Founded in 1974, CASTME has members throughout the Commonwealth. It works to advance the social relevance of science, technology and mathematics teaching by networking educators in these subjects. Further details of the activities of CASTME are given in Chapter 8 of this volume.

Chapter 10: THE COMMONWEALTH, STUDENT MOBILITY AND TRANSNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

James Urwick

Introduction

During the twentieth century the international mobility of students played an important part in the processes of decolonisation and nation-building that gave rise to the modern Commonwealth of Nations. Both the long-distance movement of students from former colonies to universities in the UK and the Dominions, and more regional movements of students to the older universities in other parts of the Commonwealth, were important elements. Some of the latter universities began as accredited colleges of the University of London, providing the vision of an international standard for degrees.¹

The first Commonwealth Education Conference, held at Oxford in 1959, identified four major reasons for supporting student mobility in higher education within the Commonwealth. Firstly, such mobility would enable students to achieve professional development in fields not available in their own countries. This applied especially to fields of study that had developed recently and were not widely available. Secondly, mobility would extend the choice of subjects for students from small countries in particular. The third reason was that mobility would strengthen comparative and international studies and disciplines. The fourth reason, partly related to the third, was that the presence of international students in host countries would broaden the outlook of home students. Underpinning the arguments was a desire to promote “equality of educational opportunity at the highest level”.²

These considerations resulted in several important initiatives. The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP, the progress of which is discussed in Chapter 3) was established in 1959. The Council for Education in the Commonwealth (CEC) was formed in the same year as a voluntary association, with support for student mobility as part of its agenda. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), developed from the Universities Bureau of the British Empire, received a royal charter in 1963. More recently the Commonwealth

Universities Study Abroad Consortium (CUSAC), which was started in 1993, has provided links in 20 countries for the exchange of undergraduate students.

In spite of the rapid world-wide growth of higher education, all of the reasons for supporting student mobility that were identified in 1959 continue to have a relevance that is too often overlooked. In particular, the disparities in higher education resources, between nations of different income level, remain very great. Arguably, the failure to achieve consistent standards for degrees internationally provides an additional reason for supporting movements and exchanges of students and academic staff, in that personal experience of higher standards can encourage reform where it is needed. As this chapter will show, international student mobility has continued to grow rapidly in recent years, both in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. However, current circumstances, both economic and political, make it challenging for higher education institutions in the Commonwealth to use student mobility for the developmental purposes indicated. This chapter provides an overview of recent trends in this and alternative forms of mobility in higher education and sets out some challenges that the Commonwealth faces in this area.

Recent past developments: differential fees and Commonwealth responses

In the period from 1967 to 1980 higher education in the UK moved from a position of charging the same fees to international as to home students to one of charging full cost fees to students who came from outside the European Community (EC). For these non-EC students, the basis of funding was changed from grants and subsidies to user charges. Although the “full cost” approach was widely opposed by academic communities in the UK and elsewhere, it was not long before other major host countries within the Commonwealth - Australia, New Zealand and some parts of Canada - also introduced differential fees for international

¹ The historical background provided in this section is based to a large extent on: K. Maxey, “Commonwealth Student Mobility”, in *Working Together in Education: a Commonwealth Update*, ed. P. Williams, pp. 58-66 (London: Commonwealth Consortium for Education, 2009).

² UK, Commonwealth Relations Office, *Report of the Commonwealth Education Conference*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1959).

students, which came to be seen as a source of much-needed institutional revenue. South Africa, however, has been notable for adhering to the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training of 1997, not charging fees to international students from SADC countries and having relatively low differential fees for others.³

Commonwealth representatives have responded to the changes in fee policy by seeking to monitor their effects on student mobility within the Commonwealth and by seeking concessions for certain categories of students. The monitoring was at first entrusted to a Commonwealth Standing Committee on Student Mobility, appointed by the Secretary-General. More recently it has been done by civil society bodies. In Britain the CEC, in partnership with the UK Council for Overseas Student Affairs (UKCOSA), produced a joint report in 2000 for the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM), which was followed by CEC updates.⁴ However, on the central issue of the level of fees, none of these bodies has obtained more than temporary concessions for Commonwealth students from governments of the relevant host countries. In the UK they have also had to campaign vigorously for maintenance of the Government's contribution to the funding of the CSFP. In the case of other governments that have enhanced their contributions, the role of lobbyists has been less evident.

During the past two decades the exponential growth, world wide, of demand for higher education has coincided with pressures on public budgets, advocacy of increased charges to students and the intensified influence of corporate attitudes, values and practices on the management of higher education - variously portrayed as entrepreneurial initiative or the spread of academic capitalism.⁵ These trends, although they may have increased managerial efficiency in some institutions, have combined to impede further the pursuit of developmental and equitable goals for the Commonwealth through student mobility. In the UK the Prime Minister's

Initiative, launched in 1999 and renewed in 2006, has supported efforts to attract international students into higher education, but only through intensified marketing and not through subsidies or grants. On the other hand, the availability of 'transnational' alternatives to the international mobility of students, such as 'off-shore' satellite campuses, programmes jointly offered by local and foreign universities, and international distance learning, has been increasing. We shall return to these and other current issues after documenting some recent trends in the enrolment of international students.

Recent enrolment trends in major host countries of the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth continues to play a large part globally in the hosting of international students. In 2010 Australia, Canada and the UK were among the seven 'top destinations', between them hosting about 24 per cent of the world total of such students.⁶ An overview of recent enrolment trends in five Commonwealth countries that host significant numbers of international students, and for which recent time series are available, is provided by Figure 10.1. This presentation is limited to students in Levels 5 and 6 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)⁷: that is, in general terms, those in degree or equivalent programmes. It should be kept in mind that considerable numbers also enrol in lower vocational and short-term training programmes.

The column charts in Figure 10.1 illustrate several points. Firstly, in the period 2005-9 overall enrolment of international students increased in all cases: by over 100 per cent in Malaysia, by 50 per cent in Australia and by 15-20 per cent in the other cases. Secondly, the increase, in all cases except that of the UK, was more rapid in the non-Commonwealth than in the Commonwealth component, although it affected both. Thirdly, in the UK the absolute increase was slightly greater for students from

³ C-L. Chien and F.C. Kot, *New Patterns in Student Mobility in the Southern Africa Development Community: UIS Information Bulletin No. 7* (Montreal, UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2010), 8.

⁴ See: CEC and UKCOSA, *Student Mobility on the Map: Tertiary Education Interchange in the Commonwealth on the Threshold of the 21st Century* (London: CEC, 2000); K. Maxey, *International Student Mobility in the Commonwealth: 2006 Update* (London: CEC, 2006).

⁵ See for example: B.R. Clarke, *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organisational Pathways to Transformation*, (New York: Elsevier, 1998); S. Slaughter and G. Leslie, *Academic Capitalism* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

⁶ Institute of International Education, *Project Atlas: Trends and Global Data 2001*. Available at: <http://www.iie.org/en/research-and-publications/project-atlas>

⁷ UNESCO, *International Standard Classification of Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 1997), 34-35.

FIGURE 10.1: ANNUAL ENROLMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, ISCED LEVELS 5 AND 6, IN SELECTED COMMONWEALTH HOST COUNTRIES

Codes: general

For all host countries except South Africa, enrolments are sub-divided into the following four categories, by Commonwealth or non-Commonwealth country of origin and by the Human Development Index (HDI) level of the country of origin:

COMVH & H = Commonwealth, very high or high HDI level

COM M & L = Commonwealth, medium or low HDI level

NON-COMVH & H = Non-Commonwealth, very high or high HDI level

NON-COM M & L = Non-Commonwealth, medium or low HDI level

Codes used for South Africa only

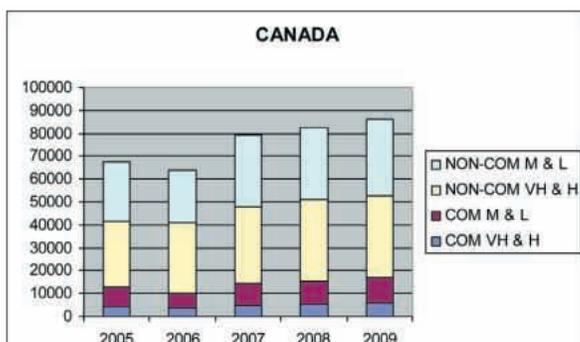
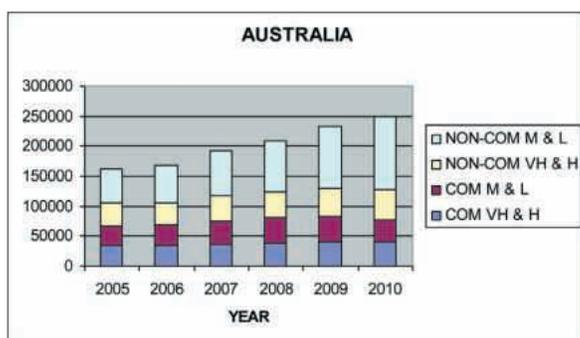
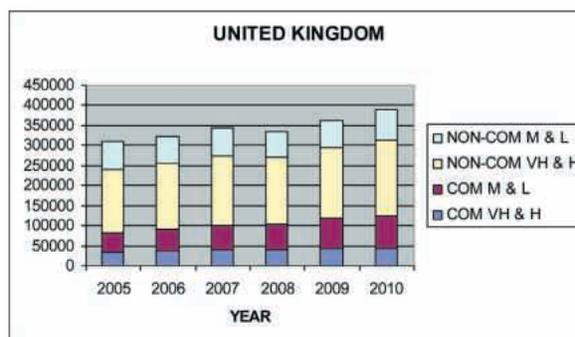
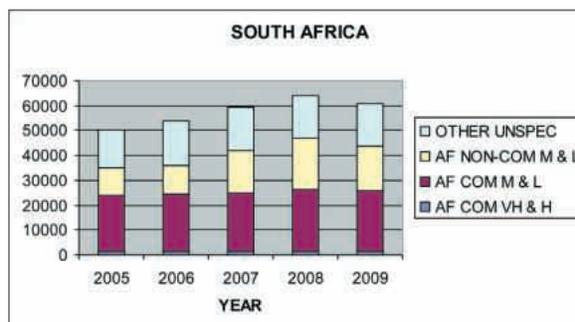
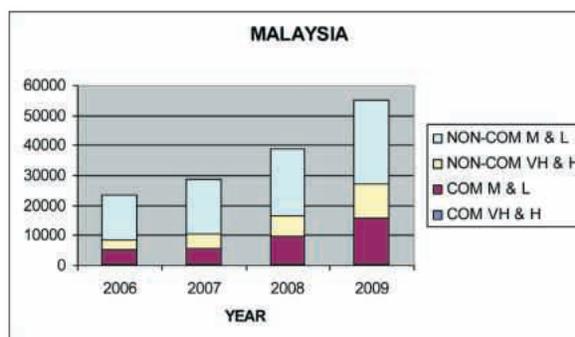
AF COMVH & H = African Commonwealth, very high or high HDI level

AF COM M & L = African Commonwealth, medium or low HDI level

AF NON-COM M & L = African Non-Commonwealth, medium or low HDI level

OTHER UNSPEC = Others, with country of origin not specified

Sources: UNESCO Institute for Statistics; UNDP classification of HDI in 2011.



countries classified as very high or high on the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI), while in Australia, Canada and Malaysia it was greater for students from medium and low HDI countries. Table 10.1 supplements the charts of Figure 10.1 by showing the enrolment statistics for the same host countries and categories of students, in the years 2005 and 2009, together with students of unspecified category and proportions of the total.

A few limitations and assumptions of the data need to be mentioned. In the case of South Africa, details of countries of origin are not available for students from outside Africa and for this reason a general 'unspecified' category is included in the chart. In the other countries there were relatively small numbers

TABLE 10.1: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLMENT IN SELECTED COMMONWEALTH HOST COUNTRIES, 2005 AND 2009

Country & Year	Categories of students hosted (Commonwealth or non-Commonwealth and HDI levels as in Figure 1):						
		Com., VH&H	Com. M&L	Non-Com., VH&H	Non-Com., VH&	Un-spec.	Total ^a
Australia							
2005	Enrolment	34,554	32,636	37,539	58,346	13,930	177,005
	% of total	20	18	21	33	8	100
2009	Enrolment	41,442	41,039	46,413	102,388	25,353	257,635
	% of total	16	16	18	40	10	100
Canada							
2005	Enrolment	4,482	8,415	28,689	26,391	1,404	69,111
	% of total	6	12	42	38	2	100
2009	Enrolment	5,693	11,397	35,541	33,550	10,771 ^b	96,952
	% of total	6	12	37	35	11	100
Malaysia							
2006^c	Enrolment	249	4,943	31,58	15,356	47	23,753
	% of total	1	21	13	65	0	100
2009	Enrolment	560	15,433	11,259	28,052	1,578	56,882
	% of total	1	27	20	49	3	100
United Kingdom							
2005	Enrolment	34,283	48,513	158,498	69,317	7,675	318,256
	% of total	11	15	50	22	2	100
2009	Enrolment	41,881	76,790	176,210	66,163	7,773	368,817
	% of total	11	21	48	18	2	100
Categories of students hosted by South Africa:							
		Com., VH&H	Com. M&L	Non-Com., VH&H	Non-Com., VH&	Un-spec.	Total
South Africa							
2005	Enrolment	1,554	22,370	0	11,170	15,035	50,129
	% of total	3	45	0	22	30	100
2009	Enrolment	1,156	24,704	0	17,823	17,173	60,856
	% of total	2	41	0	29	28	100

^aThere are minor differences between the some of the total enrolments shown and those published by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

^bNumber for 2008, as that of 2009 is not available.

^cNumbers for 2006, as those for 2005 are not available.

of students for whom either the country or the HDI level of the country could not be specified: for simplicity these students are omitted from the charts, but they are included in Table 10.1. Enrolment statistics are not available for the year 2005 in the case of Malaysia, while those for 2010 are not yet available for Canada, Malaysia or South Africa. In the classification of incoming students, Hong Kong (an autonomous region within China) is treated as a separate unit with 'very high' HDI status, while the rest of China has medium status.

A few contextual points may be mentioned, with reference to the year 2009 as an example. The international students hosted by Australia included 84,000 from China (including Hong Kong and Macao) and 20,000 from Malaysia. Those hosted by Canada included 7,000 from the USA, but these were outnumbered by 26,000 from China. South Africa hosted 39,000 students from SADC countries (mostly members of the Commonwealth), including 14,000 from Zimbabwe. The UK hosted 118,000 students from other parts of the European Union (EU), enrolled on the same terms as home students. These EU students hosted by the UK

were all non-Commonwealth except for 12,000 from Cyprus, Gibraltar and Malta. (Figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000.⁸)

The demand for international mobility by students from the medium and low HDI countries of the Commonwealth has continued to be constrained by financial and immigration barriers in traditional destinations such as Australia, New Zealand and the UK (a matter that will be discussed further). An important issue, therefore, is how easily such students can identify alternative destinations that offer a quality higher education at lower cost. When discussing this issue in the mid-1980s, Selvaratnam noted the increasing importance of India and Singapore as host countries.⁹ In recent years significant developments are the emergence of Malaysia as a host country and the stronger regional role of South Africa. Singapore too has continued to increase in importance as a host country: by 2010 it had a total of over 48,000 international students in higher education, although details of their countries of origin are not available. India's total in universities (not including professional colleges) seems to have increased from 12,374 in 2006¹⁰ to 21,778 in 2009, a figure described as disappointing.¹¹ For the groups of small island states in the Caribbean and the South Pacific, the campuses of the Universities of the West Indies and the South Pacific have always provided a multi-state, regional service and in this sense are special cases. Nevertheless the regional role of these campuses has been strengthened in the past through the sponsorship, especially by the governments of Canada and New Zealand, of 'third country training' for students from the smaller islands.¹²

TABLE 10.2: COMMONWEALTH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLMENTS, ISCED LEVELS 5 AND 6, IN SELECTED HOST COUNTRIES, 2009

Host country	Students from Commonwealth countries with:			Total	Percentage of HE enrol. ^b
	VH & H HDI	M & L HDI	Unknown HDI ^a		
A. Commonwealth					
Australia	41,442	42,039	22	83,503	6.96
Canada	5,693	11,397	0	17,090	na
Malaysia	560	15,433	0	15,993	1.60
New Zealand	6,559	7,548	18	14,125	5.37
UK	41,881	76,790	3	118,674	4.91
B. Non-Commonwealth					
Finland	532	2,723	0	3,255	1.10
Germany (Level 5 only)	3,502	11,308	0	14,810	na
Hong Kong (SAR, China)	225	50	0	275	0.11
Ireland	4,034	1,173	0	5,207	2.85
Netherlands	320	441	0	761	0.12
Norway	532	1,585	0	2,117	0.97
Russian Federation	2,900	7,695	2	10,597	0.11
Sweden	558	5,401	0	5,959	1.41
USA	64,063	135,929	10	200,002	1.05

Notes

^aNo Human Development Index is available for Nauru or Tuvalu.

^bTotal as a percentage of all higher education enrolment in the host country.

Commonwealth enrolments in Commonwealth and other host countries

The Commonwealth contributes substantially to the global outflow of international students. It accounts for 21 per cent of all the outbound numbers estimated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics for 2009; similarly it accounts for 20 per cent of the numbers estimated for 2005.¹³ These students have a great variety of destinations.

⁸The sources are the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency.

⁹V. Selvaratnam, "Student Mobility within the Commonwealth: Growing Constraints, New Initiatives", *Higher Education Quarterly*, 42, no. 3 (1988): 257.

¹⁰ UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

¹¹ For the 2009 statistic and comments, see: *Times of India*, 27 October 2011, available: http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-10-27/news/30327750_1_international-students-foreign-students-chinese-students.

¹² M.K. Bacchus, "Towards a Strategy for Increasing Student Mobility between Less Developed Countries in the 'Commonwealth' through Third Country Training", *International Journal of Educational Development*, 6, no. 4 (1986): 275-276.

¹³ These estimates, however, are incomplete. They give a global total of 2.98 million outwardly mobile students in 2009, whereas Project Atlas estimates a total of 3.7 million for the same year. (See Note 6.)

For a long period higher education in the United States of America (USA) has had a unique appeal to international students from Commonwealth countries because of its range and flexibility of programmes, diversity of institutions, wealth of resources, use of English, institutional scholarships and opportunities for work experience after study.¹⁴ In 2009 the USA hosted about 200,000 students from Commonwealth countries (see Table 10.2), which may have represented one-quarter of the global total of Commonwealth students studying abroad. They included about 102,000 from India and 29,000 from Canada.

Both American higher education institutions and those in other English-speaking destinations outside the Commonwealth, such as Ireland and Hong Kong, have opportunities to attract students from medium and low HDI Commonwealth countries to the extent that they keep fees moderate. In addition, some institutions in China and on the European continent, especially in Germany and the Netherlands,¹⁵ have begun to strengthen their competitive position by offering English-medium programmes in selected fields. Table 10.2 provides, for the year 2009, a comparative overview of international student enrolments of Commonwealth origin in selected host countries both within and outside the Commonwealth. As in Figure 10.1, the students are sub-divided by the HDI level of their country of origin, in the two categories, very high or high and medium or low. The table shows that, in spite of the language obstacle, Germany and the Russian Federation continue to host substantial numbers of Commonwealth students.

The last column of the table shows the Commonwealth international student total as a proportion of the country's tertiary level enrolment. The more substantial proportions are those for Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Ireland, as may be expected because of historical links, the patterns of development aid and institutional marketing efforts. But a major issue for the traditional host countries, which

has also been raised in previous Commonwealth publications, is whether the medium- and low-HDI Commonwealth countries have an adequate representation.¹⁶ This relates to the broader issue of whether there is an acceptable balance, in the hosting of international students, between goals of human resource development and those of commercial success in a competitive market.

Commonwealth countries of origin and their level of demand

As might be expected, some of the more populous Commonwealth countries send relatively large numbers of students elsewhere. Table 10.3 lists, in descending order, all Commonwealth countries that had at least 5,000 students receiving higher education abroad in 2009, using the estimates available from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). However, the relative level of demand is better indicated by the 'outbound mobility ratio'.¹⁷ This statistic is only available from UIS for about half of the Commonwealth countries, but Table 10.4 shows those for which it is available and estimated to be 5 per cent or more in 2009. Not surprisingly,

TABLE 10.3: OUTWARDLY MOBILE STUDENTS BY COMMONWEALTH COUNTRY WITH AT LEAST 5,000, IN 2009

Country	Students abroad in 2009	Country (continued)	Students abroad in 2009
India	196,149	Sri Lanka	16,079
Malaysia	54,656	Kenya	13,666
Canada	46,000	Australia	10,058
Nigeria	35,892	Mauritius	7,920
Pakistan	31,584	Ghana	7,706
Cyprus	24,583	South Africa	6,227
UK	22,621	Jamaica	5,850
Singapore	19,639	Tanzania	5,633
Cameroon	19,045	Trinidad & Tobago	5,559
Bangladesh	18,727	Zambia	5,086

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates.

¹⁴ See also Selvaratnam, 260

¹⁵ W. Archer and J. Cheng, *International Pricing Study: A Snapshot of UK and Key Competitor Country International Student Fees* (London: UK Higher Education International Unit, 2011), 20,22.

¹⁶ See, for example: CEC and UKCOSA (Note 4), 43, 59; L. Bown, "Building bridges in the Commonwealth: Issues of Student Mobility", in *Education in the Commonwealth: the First 40 Years*, ed. L. Bown, 186 (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2003).

¹⁷ The outbound mobility ratio is here defined as "the number of students from a given country studying abroad [in tertiary education] as a percentage of the total tertiary enrolment in that country" (UNESCO Institute for Statistics Glossary).

TABLE 10.4: COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES WITH HIGH DEMAND FOR OUTWARD STUDENT MOBILITY, 2009

Country	Outbound mobility ratio, 2009	Country (continued)	Outbound mobility ratio, 2009
Cyprus	79.33	Singapore	9.89
Brunei	49.14	Barbados	9.73
St. Lucia	44.74	Jamaica	9.51
Guyana	22.30	Grenada	9.15
Belize	12.44	Kenya	8.14
Malta	11.00	Malaysia	5.46
Cameroon	10.94		

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates.

some of these are small island states in which it is difficult to achieve economies of scale in higher education. Others, such as Malaysia and Singapore, are also important globally as host countries, as indicated above. Barbados and Jamaica are also significant hosts in the Caribbean context. Such considerations have caused Hans de Wit to use the term, 'circulation', in describing international student mobility,¹⁸ but that usage may reflect more of a hope than a reality. In most cases a considerable imbalance continues: countries are either mainly senders of students, such as India, Nigeria, Cameroon and Belize, or mainly hosts, like Australia and South Africa.

The private demand for international student mobility

A large number of 'push' and 'pull' factors which may motivate individuals to seek study opportunities outside their usual country of residence have been identified by various writers and summarised by Hans de Wit.¹⁹ Among the 'push' factors, which relate to the country of origin, it is likely that there will be some positive factors, such as a certain level of information about the prospective host country and prospects of employment on return, as well as negative ones such as limited or poor quality opportunities in the national higher education.

The possible 'pull' factors, relating to the host country, include not only the perceived status of its qualifications and quality of its programmes, but the existence of cultural links, a 'Diaspora' community from the country of origin, and employment opportunities during or after study. Other factors that may influence the choice of host country are living costs, the availability of scholarships or financial concessions, language requirements and immigration requirements.²⁰ Cost factors are all the more important because, from the available evidence, most international students are self-sponsored. British statistics for the academic year 2008-9, for example, show 66 per cent of full-time international students in UK higher education as having 'no award or financial backing' and only in postgraduate research programmes was this group in a minority (one-third).²¹

A point that deserves emphasis is that this kind of private demand is very sensitive to, and to some extent shaped by, the policies and behaviour of governments both in sending and in receiving countries. As international students in many cases carry higher financial and social risks than those studying in the home country, their level of confidence in the institutions and environment of the host country is an important factor in mobility.

Criticisms and constraints to mobility

The introduction of differential fees for international students in countries such as the UK and Australia related to a judgement, not necessarily correct but common among politicians, that the government could not afford extensive subsidies to such students.²² It was argued that, while the ability of home students' households to bear the cost of higher education had to be considered on grounds of equity, there was no such obligation in the case of international students—who have therefore been 'soft targets' for fees. In the UK such attitudes have been hardened since the 1980s, firstly by the growth of demand from domestic and European Union (EU) students, whose

¹⁸ H. de Wit, "The Changing Dynamics in International Student Circulation" in *The Dynamics of International Student Circulation in a Global Context*, ed. H. de Wit and others (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2008), 44.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁰ Archer and Cheng (Note 14), 23.

²¹ Data from the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency: overall there were 202,665 with no award or financial backing, out of a total of 305,970. (Those in further education are not included here.)

²² Selvaratnam (p. 259) mentions that Canada and New Zealand were also affected.

tuition fees have been restricted by government regulation, and secondly by increasing pressures on the public funding of higher education in general. Government policies in the UK and some other host countries now avoid the public cost criticism by leaving the international provision of higher education almost entirely to the market.²³ These policies have conditioned higher education institutions, whether public or private, to think of international provision (outside the EU) primarily as a market to be exploited commercially and a means of subsidising, if necessary, domestic provision.

Somewhat distinct from the public cost criticisms have been those relating to the 'brain drain', in which the permanent emigration of some international students plays a part. As the extent of immigration has a high political profile in some of the major host countries, politicians can present the brain drain as an abuse of hospitality. At the same time, governments of the sending countries understandably seek to limit the damage to their own human resources. Student mobility is unlikely to be the main cause of the brain drain, but can facilitate the process.

Further types of criticism are expressed from the perspective of the sending countries in the global South. One is that the knowledge and skills acquired in the North are not sufficiently relevant to the home country environment.²⁴ But in mitigation it must be said that many host institutions in the global North have acquired both expertise and resources that are directly relevant to students' countries of origin, especially in programmes with an international focus. Other criticisms are that the mobile students, as a result of studying in the North, find it difficult to re-adjust culturally to their own societies and that their absence deprives national universities of high achieving students.²⁵ Such arguments for restricting student mobility, however, could easily be repressive in their effects: poorly delivered programmes and political instability in the country of origin are among the 'push' factors in student mobility.²⁶

The main, direct constraints on student mobility in practice are financial factors and immigration policies. Fees and costs of living are relatively high in some host countries; governments and individuals, especially in low-income countries, have a limited capacity to meet those costs. In addition, some immigration policies have increased the restrictions on international students' work opportunities both during and after study, as well as increasing the size of financial deposits required. However, many international, as well as domestic, students need to work part-time in order to meet some of their costs. There are also strong professional arguments, in some fields, for work experience in the host country for a limited period after the completion of studies. Immigration policies of this kind are therefore a major disincentive for international students in general and effectively close the door to many whose financial resources are modest. The recent introduction of stricter rules in Australia and the UK has provoked much criticism from university personnel and analysts.²⁷ It is argued that an obsessive concern to restrict immigration is unhelpful for the hosting of international students and therefore entails an economic loss, as well as a loss of goodwill, for the host countries concerned.

Some indirect influences on mobility may also be mentioned. Higher education systems within some of the sending countries have been growing rapidly, partly through increased involvement of the private sector, and absorb demand in some areas. Where such growth focuses on first degree programmes, it may shift the demand for study abroad towards higher degree programmes.

An important circumstance in the UK is the recent actions of the national government in reducing the level of public subsidy (the 'teaching grant') to higher education and raising the 'cap' on domestic and EU student fees from £3,290 to £9,000 per annum. (Within the UK, the Scottish government has so far chosen not to raise the cap in this way.) These actions increase the pressure on universities to seek revenue through

²³ On related issues, see P. Altbach and J. Knight, "The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities", *Journal of Studies in International Education* 11, nos. 3-4 (2007): 291.

²⁴ Selvaratnam, 263.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 262-264.

²⁶ On the latter, see Bacchus (Note 10), 280.

²⁷ See for example, C. Ziguas, "The Year Education Exporters Started Turning away Students", in *Borderless 2011: Perspectives on the Future*, ed. Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE), 15 (London: OBHE, 2011), <http://www.obhe.org>; E. Acton, *The UKBA's Proposed Restrictions on Tier 4 Visas: Implications for University Recruitment of Overseas Students* (Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute, 2011). In May 2012 a large group of British university and business leaders and other prominent figures wrote to the Prime Minister asking that international students be removed from the official net migration statistics: see <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=420130>.

competitive marketing of their programmes, whether domestic or international. The new scenario is likely to imply that the commercial motive for recruiting international students continues to be emphasised, although domestic and EU students will now contribute more to university revenue. The context is that, in 2010-11, there were 130,120 EU students, accounting for 5 per cent of all higher education enrolment in the UK, while 298,110 other international students accounted for 12 per cent of the enrolment.²⁸ Because of the raising of the cap on fees, it is likely that the priorities of particular universities will determine the levels of fees, both domestic and international, to a greater extent than previously.

Financial and economic considerations for host countries

To the extent that the provision of higher education for international students is seen simply as a competitive commercial activity, host universities and countries will try to set their fees in such a way as to capture viable numbers while maintaining or enhancing their international reputations. However, recent comparative research on fee levels for international students in major host countries (including six within the Commonwealth) shows that there are substantial cross-national differences in fee levels. With regard to Commonwealth countries, this research indicates that host institutions in Australia and the UK tend to charge substantially higher fees (in the range, £10,000-20,000) than do those in Canada, New Zealand and Singapore (£5,000-15,000). Those in Malaysia tend to charge less than £5,000, as do their competitors in China. (These figures were based on simple currency conversions.)

An interesting case outside the Commonwealth is Germany, where international students benefit from the same subsidies as home students and tuition fees are either minimal or zero for all students. It is clear that, although the fee variations between universities are related to

their rankings within some countries (as in the UK), the policy framework determined by national governments (and in some countries by state or provincial governments) is the primary influence on fee levels.²⁹

Research reported by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI, Oxford) is relevant in showing the substantial economic advantages to the UK of hosting international students: both those from within the European Union (EU) and those from elsewhere.³⁰ Taking all major costs and benefits into consideration, the authors estimate that, in the academic year 2004-5, there were net cash benefits to the economy of £9,900 per EU student and £17,900 per non-EU student. The annual contributions to national Gross Domestic Product, however, are estimated as higher for EU students because they were more likely to work in the UK after graduation: £17,900 per EU student compared with £5,500 per non-EU student. This research suggests that the earlier (1980s) cost criticism of international student mobility may not have served national interests at all. It presents a strong argument that, on economic grounds alone, the government of a host country such as the UK should to some degree subsidise higher education provision for international students from outside the region, thereby increasing their enrolment, rather than pressuring universities to maximise their fee income from this source.

In contrast with the 'full-cost fees' policy in the UK, New Zealand allows international students at the doctoral level to pay fees at the home rate,³¹ while South Africa's fees for non-SADC students are only 25 per cent above the home rate. In the light of the HEPI research findings, such policies may well be reasonable for the economies of the host countries as well as having merit from an equity perspective. It is true that the British Government contributes a substantial share of funding for the CSFP: in the financial year 2009-10 this amounted to £18.8 million for 1,455 award holders.³² But this effort, while commendable, is modest in relation to national economic gains from the export of higher education. For example, direct spending

²⁸ Enrolment data from the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency.

²⁹ This is the author's own interpretation of data presented by Archer and Cheng (Note 14). The approximate price ranges that follow are based on the same study.

³⁰ P. Vickers and B. Bekhradnia, *The Economic Costs and Benefits of International Students* (Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute, 2007).

³¹ Archer and Cheng, 18.

³² Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom, *51st Annual Report to the Secretary of State for International Development* (London: Author, 2011): 8, 45.

by international students in the UK in 2004-5 is estimated at £3.74 billion³³: a figure which would now be higher in real terms and which does not include multiplier effects. Other economic gains to host countries are attributable to the alternative forms of mobility that are discussed in the next section.

Alternatives to traditional student mobility

By 2005 the growth and diversification of the international provision of higher education, involving the mobility of institutions and knowledge as well as students, was already a subject of much discussion and speculation. In the period since then the growth and diversity have continued, affecting educational opportunities in most Commonwealth countries. Among the alternatives to international student mobility of the traditional kind, three main types of strategy may be distinguished³⁴ :

- A university or training organisation of the providing country establishes a satellite campus in the receiving country. This may be staffed by a combination of expatriate and national personnel. Students may be recruited regionally in some cases.
- A partnership is formed between a higher institution of the providing country and one of the receiving country, in order to provide either a jointly taught and administered degree programme or a programme “franchised” to the second institution. There are many possible variants; in some cases degrees are jointly awarded.
- A distance learning programme is provided internationally, through on-line facilities. In many instances, however, this approach is combined with traditional student mobility or with the satellite campus strategy.

Among initiatives of the first kind, the satellite campuses of the University of Nottingham (UK) in Malaysia and China are well known, successful examples. As reported recently, Malaysia’s Limkokwing University of Creative Technology has

‘returned the compliment’ by starting a satellite campus in London, as well as one in Botswana. A notable case of an Australian provider is RMIT University, which offers programmes through partner institutions in six Asian countries including Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka. There are also many instances of satellite campuses and joint programmes in Commonwealth countries of Africa and South Asia, but they are poorly documented. These developments are useful for expanding the opportunities that are financially accessible to students in the low-income countries. However, there are many difficulties with regard to quality assurance in these initiatives, both for the providing and for the receiving countries.³⁵ Jane Knight warns that in some instances “diploma mills and rogue providers are selling bogus qualifications”.³⁶

As with traditional student mobility, Australia, Malaysia, South Africa and the UK are among the countries most active in these alternative kinds of international delivery of higher education. Table 10.5 shows some comparable statistics for Australia and the UK in 2010 (the 2009-10 academic year in the case of the UK). Australia had nearly half as many international students offshore (i.e. overseas) as it had onshore, while in the case of the UK the offshore number had actually overtaken the onshore enrolment. Australia’s rates of growth between 2009 and 2010 were 4.2 per cent for all offshore and 4.6

TABLE 10.5: STUDENTS STUDYING WHOLLY OFFSHORE FOR AUSTRALIAN AND UK HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS, 2010

Type of provision	Australia 2010		UK 2009-10	
	No. students	Percentage	No. students	Percentage
Studying on campus: satellite, overseas partner or other	76,446	73.0	293,675	71.9
Distance, flexible or distributed learning	28,232	27.0	115,010	28.1
Total, offshore	104,678	100.0	408,685	100.0
Total, onshore (for comparison)	335,273		405,810	

Sources: Australian Education International, ‘Transnational education in the higher education sector’, *Research Snapshot Series*, December, 2011: <https://www.aei.gov.au/research/research-snapshots/pages/default.aspx>; UK Council for International Student Affairs, http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/about/statistics_he.php.

³³ Vickers and Bekhradnia (Note 29), 10.

³⁴ This classification is influenced by the following sources: B.J.G. Wood, S.M. Tapsall and G.N. Soutar, “Borderless Education: Some Implications for Management”, *International Journal of Educational Management* 19, nos. 4-5 (2005): 432-435; Altbach and Knight, 291-292.

³⁵ Altbach and Knight, 300-302.

³⁶ Knight, J. (2011), “Has Internationalization Lost its Way?” in *Borderless 2011: Perspectives on the Future*, ed. OBHE, 10.



per cent for onshore enrolment, but highest for distance learning enrolment at 12.4 per cent. In the case of the UK, total offshore enrolment grew by a remarkable 23 per cent between 2009-10 and 2010-11 (to 503,795), most of the increase being attributable to enrolment with overseas partner institutions, while onshore enrolment grew by 6 per cent.³⁷ In the context of stricter immigration requirements, as discussed above, this shift towards offshore enrolment is likely to continue.

These statistics imply that much of the Commonwealth (as well as other) demand for Australian and British qualifications is now being met through offshore provision, with the emphasis on partnership arrangements and distance programmes. In both the Australian and British cases distance or mixed-mode programmes account for more than a quarter of the offshore enrolments. The distance element in study abroad for UK qualifications owes much to the Open University, which specialises in this form of delivery. The University of South Africa has developed on similar lines and contributes strongly to the role of South African higher education in the Southern African sub-region. Chapter 4 discusses the important role of the Commonwealth of Learning in promoting distance learning, both in higher education and at other levels, across the Commonwealth.

Conclusion

The growth of alternatives to international student mobility plays a very important part in the widening of educational opportunities, in the face of private and public financial constraints. It is to be welcomed on grounds of equity and development goals. Nevertheless the demand for student mobility of the traditional kind continues to grow in absolute terms and it has certain inherent advantages. Study on a partner or satellite campus is unlikely to offer such a rich cultural or academic experience as study on the main university campus in another country. As Kees Maxey observes, such experience is important for Commonwealth interaction at the personal level.³⁸

This situation presents various challenges for Commonwealth governments and higher

education institutions. Firstly, more effective quality assurance is needed for transnational (offshore and distance) programmes. Secondly, for research and policy purposes proper records of these programmes need to be maintained at national and international levels: Commonwealth agencies could encourage the UNESCO Institute for Statistics to include them in its regular census of higher education. Thirdly, renewed consideration should be given to the public benefits of international student mobility.

This last issue is the one over which Commonwealth agencies may face a hard task of advocacy at a time when a number of national governments are preoccupied with restraining public expenditure and reducing national debt. But this is an area in which long-term considerations should carry more weight. Well-planned public investment in international student mobility can enhance its cultural, social and economic benefits, both to the host countries and to the students' countries of origin.

³⁷ The sources for the statistics in this paragraph are the same as for Table 5.

³⁸ Maxey (Note 1), 66.

Chapter 11: EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN COMMONWEALTH SMALL STATES

Michael Crossley & Pearlette Louisy

Introduction

The impact and strategic significance of Commonwealth co-operation in education is demonstrated especially well with reference to the experience of small states. The Commonwealth has pioneered support for education in small states since convening the globally influential pan-Commonwealth Meeting of Experts in Mauritius in 1985.¹ The Commonwealth is now widely acknowledged as the leading international organisation for work in this arena – with a mandate reinforced by the fact that over half of its member nations are classified as small states.

Box 11.1 Commonwealth Small States

“The Secretariat’s definition for Small States is countries with a population of 1.5 million or less. These states possess unique special development challenges – limited diversification, limited capacity, poverty, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental change, remoteness and isolation, openness, and income volatility. (For operational purposes, however,) The Secretariat’s grouping of Small States also includes the larger member countries of Botswana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia and Papua New Guinea because they share many of the same characteristics of small states.”²
(Words in parenthesis added by authors for purposes of clarification).

Table 11.1 provides selected socio-economic details relating to Commonwealth small states and from this it can be seen that they span a diversity of contexts, with many having total population figures below 250,000. Within this group, a large proportion can also be classified as small island developing states (SIDS) – a category that faces increasingly urgent challenges generated by rising sea levels, climate change and frequent environmental shocks and disasters.

From the table it can be seen that many Commonwealth small states can be found in geographical clusters within the Pacific and Caribbean regions – where they share many common challenges relating to scale, isolation and dependence.³ While small states often have mutual strengths, their shared challenges and vulnerabilities underpin and help to define distinctive development and educational priorities - and the need for collective action and strategic Commonwealth co-operation.⁴ Collaboration can, for example, help to generate economies of scale and so reduce unit costs, and it can help to deal with isolation through resource-sharing and the use of modern communications technologies.⁵

Small scale also generates distinctive challenges in the context of the increasingly competitive global economy.⁶ This is combined with dilemmas that arise from the ‘managed intimacy’ that characterises personal and professional relationships in small states, and the prominent place and contribution of migration, including what Baldacchino usefully refers to as “brain rotation”⁷ and associated remittances from a strategically significant Diaspora.

Commonwealth small states thus face many common development issues and challenges, and while the Secretariat has a strong track record of advocacy on their behalf, it is especially well positioned to do more “to build their resilience and competitiveness so that they can take advantage of the opportunities, and meet the challenges arising from globalisation”.⁸ In this respect, the nature and potential of support for education deserves particular recognition and attention.

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

² <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/180407>.

³ C. Brock, *Scale, Isolation and Dependence: Educational Development in Island Developing and Other Specially Disadvantaged States* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1984); M.K. Bacchus and C. Brock, eds., *The Challenge of Scale: Educational Development in Small States of the Commonwealth* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat).

⁴ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1985.

⁵ R. Chandra, T. Korovulaono and V. Hazelman, “Leveraging Technology for Tertiary Education in the South Pacific”, in *Tertiary Education in Small States: Planning in the Context of Globalisation*, ed. M. Martin and M. Bray (Paris: UNESCO International Institute of Educational Planning, 2011).

⁶ M. Bacchus, “The Education Challenges Facing Small Nation States in the Increasingly Competitive Global Economy of the Twenty-First Century”, *Comparative Education* 44, no. 2 (2008): 127-145.

⁷ G. Baldacchino, “Entrepreneurship in Smaller Jurisdictions: Appraising a Global Elite”, *Comparative Education* 44, no. 2 (2008): 187-201.

⁸ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan 2008/09-2011/12, Revised* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010), 7.

TABLE 11.1: Commonwealth Small States: Population International Indices, "Islandness" and Aid						
State^a	Total Population (2008)	% Population aged 0-14 (2008)	HDI^b Ranking (2007)	EDI^c Ranking (2007)	Geography: L= landlocked I= island MI=multi-island	Aid Per Capita Constant US\$ (2007)
Below 100,000						
Tuvalu	12,200	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	MI	1,821
Nauru	13,800	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	I	2,330
St Kitts & Nevis	49,000	n.a.	62	n.a.	MI	359
Dominica	73,000	n.a.	73	n.a.	I	442
Antigua & Barbuda	86,000	n.a.	47	n.a.	MI	15
Seychelles	86,000	n.a.	57	n.a.	MI	40
Kiribati	97,000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	MI	317
100,000 - 250,000						
Tonga	104,000	37	99	49	MI	400
Grenada	106,000	28	74	n.a.	I	159
St Vincent & Grenadines	109,000	27	91	72	MI	588
St. Lucia	170,000	27	69	60	I	122
Samoa	182,000	40	94	n.a.	MI	415
Vanuatu	231,000	39	126	n.a.	MI	293
250,000 - 1 million						
Barbados	255,000	18	37	64	I	67
Maldives	310,000	29	95	58	MI	100
Belize	311,000	36	93	80		69
Bahamas	335,000	26	52	73	MI	-
Brunei Darussalam	397,000	27	30	44		-
Malta	411,000	16	38	61	MI	-
Solomon Islands	507,000	39	135	n.a.	MI	536
Guyana	763,000	30	114	n.a.		367
Cyprus	864,000	18	32	13	I	-
1 - 1.5 million						
Swaziland	1,168,000	40	142	93	L	52
Mauritius	1,269,000	23	81	63	I	136
Trinidad & Tobago	1,338,000	21	64	57	MI	13
Above 1.5 million						
Gambia	1,660,000	42	168	116		32
Botswana	1,905,000	34	125	92	L	135
Lesotho	2,017,000	39	156	103	L	93
Namibia	2,114,000	37	128	74		145
Jamaica	2,689,000	30	100	n.a.	I	45
Papua New Guinea	6,448,000	40	148	n.a.	MI	59

^aThis table excludes Fiji, suspended from membership of the Commonwealth since 2009 and has a population of 837,000.

^bHDI = Human Development Index.

^cEDI = Educational Development Index.

Sources: UNDP, World Bank and UNESCO.⁹

⁹ UNDP, Human Development Report 2009. *Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development* (New York: UNDP, 2009); World Bank, *World Development Report 2010: Development and Climate Change* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2010); UNESCO, *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the Marginalised* (Paris and Oxford: UNESCO and Oxford University Press, 2010).

Working together on education in small states: “the Commonwealth factor”

By working together, and sharing experience under the small state banner, the Commonwealth has done much to help small states to both identify and attend to their distinctive educational needs and concerns. Following the 1985 Mauritius meeting, for example, the Commonwealth Secretariat played a lead role in initiating and supporting a series of regional workshops, consultancies and professionally-oriented publications focused directly upon small state priorities in education. These activities ran throughout the 1990s, covering seven core themes and providing support in areas that included: the quality of education; the organisation and management of ministries of education¹⁰; teacher education and the post-secondary sector¹¹; telecommunications and information and communications technology (ICT)¹²; and examination and assessment systems in small states.¹³ The achievements of this Commonwealth programme of work were reviewed in 1999, when it was also argued that small states had much to contribute to the wider Commonwealth, and that there was much to be gained from future collaboration in education between small states, and from “increased efforts to promote...more substantial partnerships with non-Commonwealth agencies concerned with small states”.¹⁴

The influence of these Commonwealth-inspired and Commonwealth-led initiatives has continued to the present day, with impetus maintained by further pan-Commonwealth meetings, such as the “Expert Group Consultation on Education and Human Development in Commonwealth

Small States”, held in the Seychelles in the year 2000; by follow-up initiatives on school improvement held throughout small states worldwide;¹⁵ and by sustained support for groups such as the Islands and Small States Institute at the University of Malta.¹⁶

As international education agendas – reinforced by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – increasingly prioritised development-agency support for basic education (see Chapter 5 of this volume), the place of the Commonwealth became increasingly important in assisting small states to attend to their own distinctive educational needs and priorities. For many small states, much progress had already been made in achieving access to basic education. Recent research has, for example, clearly documented how, despite less encouraging data for some, such as Solomon Islands, The Gambia and Nauru, Commonwealth small states are relatively advanced in their progress towards basic education goals and targets. The 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report indicates that, of 24 Commonwealth countries with populations under five million for which data (from 2008) were available, 19 had reached an 80 per cent primary net enrolment rate (NER) or better, with 14 of these having reached 90 per cent or better.¹⁷ Most of them have achieved almost universal access to basic education, and many have reached or are close to reaching gender parity in primary and secondary schooling. Consequently, in many instances small states sought different forms of assistance in arenas such as secondary, vocational, and tertiary education; and, for them, “contemporary priorities are especially concerned with how small states can respond to major external shocks and challenges within the environmental,

¹⁰ C. Farrugia and P. Attard, *The Multi-Functional Administrator: Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth*. (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989); J. Swartland, J., *How Do Ministries Really Work: A Case Study - Botswana*. (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989).

¹¹ R. Crocombe and M. Crocombe, *Post-Secondary Education in the South Pacific: Present Patterns and Future Options*. (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1994); L. Steward and E. Thomas, eds., *Teacher Education in the Commonwealth: Caribbean Issues and Developments* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996).

¹² Commonwealth Secretariat, *Telecommunications for Education and Development* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1997).

¹³ M. Bray and L. Steward, eds., *Examinations Systems in Small States: Comparative Perspectives on Policies, Models and Operations* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1998).

¹⁴ M. Crossley and K. Holmes, *Educational Development in the Small States of the Commonwealth: Retrospect and Prospect* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1999): 64.

¹⁵ Degazon-Johnson, R., “School Improvement in Small States: the Role of the Commonwealth”, in *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2004*, ed. Commonwealth Secretariat, 126-130 (London: The Stationery Office, 2003).

¹⁶ P. Mayo, ed., *Education in Small States: Global imperatives, regional initiatives and local dilemmas*. *Special Issue of Comparative Education*, 44, no. 2 (2008).

¹⁷ UNESCO, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011. *The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2011), statistical tables.

economic, cultural and political domains”.¹⁸ This responsiveness of the Commonwealth to a diversity of member-nation educational needs is, therefore, both rare and invaluable in the contemporary global context of international development co-operation.

The policy-oriented research noted above was initiated with Commonwealth support in 2008. This was designed to review ongoing developments, and help identify emergent educational policy priorities as held within Commonwealth small states, as a contribution to the 17th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (17CCEM), held in Kuala Lumpur in 2009. The main outputs and follow-on activities arising from this initiative present a strong, and empirically grounded, case for the continued engagement of the Commonwealth Secretariat in education “as it strives to build upon its deservedly strong international profile and comparative advantage in work designed to support the educational and development goals of small states throughout the Commonwealth and beyond”.¹⁹

The *Kuala Lumpur Communiqué*²⁰ and the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Education Strategic Plan 2010-2012²¹ built upon the 2009 initiative by identifying the advancement of “education in small states through a variety of capacity-building and research initiatives” as a priority for the current triennium. The impact of this renewed momentum can be seen in the successful implementation of four Commonwealth regional consultation workshops held in small states between 2009 and 2010.²² It is also reflected in initiatives designed to extend seminal work on the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, first inspired by Caribbean small states, to the wider Commonwealth community;²³ in ongoing partnerships with the World Bank through the Joint Task Force on Education in Small States; and, in 2011, through an influential, multidisciplinary, Expert Meeting on Growth and Development in Small States held in Malta.²⁴

Looking to the future, there is undoubtedly an urgent need for increased Commonwealth support for innovative small states co-operation relating to education for sustainable development (ESD) in the post-2015 era. For many SIDS, with the impact of increasingly visible climate change and rise in sea levels, this is emerging as perhaps the greatest priority of all. It is also one that demands improved co-operation with other international development bodies and UN agencies.²⁵

Inter-agency and tertiary education collaboration

Collaboration in education between the Commonwealth Secretariat, other international agencies, and small nation states has, moreover, long been instrumental in generating productive educational initiatives and development partnerships. In this respect, advances in Commonwealth tertiary education deserve specific recognition. 1988, for example, saw the founding of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) committed to supporting distance and flexible learning throughout member states. COL has since achieved much success in helping to develop the distinctive potential of such teaching and learning strategies for small states (see Chapter 4 of this volume). One such success story in the Caribbean island of Saint Lucia was COL’s assistance in the adaptation of distance learning curriculum materials for the fledgling outreach programme of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College which had begun operations in 1986. Today, the College’s Southern Extension Centre continues to provide post-secondary educational opportunities (including remedial and access courses) to persons in the southern districts of the island who would otherwise find it extremely challenging to travel regularly to the main Campus in the north. In more recent times and on the international level, COL has spearheaded the emergence of the Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC, see also Chapter 4).

¹⁸ M. Crossley, M., Bray and S. Packer, 2011. *Education in Small States: Policies and Priorities* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011), xviii.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

²⁰ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Kuala Lumpur Communiqué*. (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009).

²¹ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Education Strategic Plan 2010-2012: Improve and Promote Quality* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010).

²² N. Kazmi, 2011. “Educational Priorities in Asian and European Small States”, in *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2011/12*, ed. Commonwealth Secretariat (London: Nexus Strategic Partnerships, 2011).

²³ J. Penson and A. Yonemura, eds., *Next Step in Managing Teacher Migration, Papers of the Sixth Commonwealth Research Symposium on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2012).

²⁴ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Experts Meeting on Growth and Development in Small States, Malta, 17-18 November 2011* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011), <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/190628/191177/241972/expertsmeetingongrowthanddevelopmentsmallstates/>

²⁵ Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan 2008/09-2011/12 Revised* (Note 9).

This initiative opens up considerable future potential for the tertiary education sector across Commonwealth small states.²⁶

The potential for future educational co-operation between the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO can also be seen in work stemming from the 2009 International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) Policy Forum on Tertiary Education in Small States.²⁷ While this identified exciting possibilities for the future, the collected Policy Forum papers also acknowledge the considerable contributions made, over many decades, by educational co-operation between the Commonwealth small states that make up the memberships of the regional Universities of the West Indies (UWI) and of the South Pacific (USP).

Those two regional universities, UWI and USP, have long pioneered multiple forms of educational co-operation, often in collaboration with Commonwealth agencies and other regional bodies such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA). A study by Jules²⁸ explores creative and more radical ways forward for education and co-operation in the Caribbean as a whole. In the Pacific region, Australia and New Zealand also play an increasingly significant role in promoting and supporting Commonwealth educational co-operation, with the Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE), having notable impact in recent years.

Extending across the Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Ocean regions one further example of global Commonwealth co-operation in education is the University Consortium of Small Island States (UCSIS). This brings together the universities of Malta, Mauritius, South Pacific, Virgin Islands and West Indies. Its main objective is to promote research, training and dissemination of information relating to the common challenges of small states. Since the inception of UCSIS, UNESCO has supported the

Box 11.2 Language, Culture and Inclusive Education - Recent PRIDE Projects

The Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of basic Education (PRIDE) was designed as a seven-year project (2004-2010) implemented by the Institute of Education at the University of the South Pacific and jointly funded by the European Union and New Zealand aid. The project has served 15 small states and territories of the Pacific, eight which are part of the Commonwealth. PRIDE projects that have focused on marginalised groups by addressing language, culture and inclusive education include the following:

Samoa: Development of a sustainable system of inclusive education for children with disabilities

Solomon Islands: Support for children and youth who are visually impaired; vernacular education project; special education teacher supply, demand and deployment study

Tonga: Development of Tongan inclusive education pilot project

Vanuatu: Support for development of language policy; inclusive education

More information can be found on the PRIDE website: <http://www.usp.ac.fj/pride>.

consortium through its status as a UNITWIN network.²⁹

At the College level, the Pan-Commonwealth Conference on Post-Secondary Education in Small States, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in Saint Lucia in 1988, brought together national institutions from the Caribbean and the South Pacific, and was of seminal significance in advancing the development of multi-functional national tertiary education institutions in these two regions. The Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, the Conference host, built on the outcome and recommendations of the Conference by sponsoring further research work on the provision and management of tertiary education in small states – the results of which continue to inform much of the discussion and policy on the development of the sector both nationally and regionally. Future assistance from the Commonwealth

²⁶ P. West and J. Daniel, 2009. "The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth", *Open Learning* 24 (2009): 85-95.

²⁷ M. Martin and M. Bray, eds., *Tertiary Education in Small States. Planning in the Context of Globalization* (Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, 2011).

²⁸ D. Jules, "Rethinking Education for the Caribbean: A Radical Approach", *Comparative Education* 44, no. 2 (2008): 203-214.

²⁹ See UNESCO, *UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks* (Paris: UNESCO, 2009), 402. UNITWIN stands for University Twinning and Networking Programme.

Secretariat in facilitating further educational collaboration and linkages between these national institutions and the regional universities would both build institutional capacity and strengthen regional higher education systems. One of the recommendations of the research work conducted on behalf of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College was a call for the establishment of a Commonwealth Higher Education Support System for Small States which would help rationalise the development of the sector across the broad spectrum of small states. While this has yet to be realised in practice, the recommendation remains as relevant today as it was two decades ago.

Conclusions

Other examples of Commonwealth educational co-operation in small states can be identified but the place, and future potential, of the Commonwealth Secretariat in stimulating, leading and supporting successful educational collaboration is clearly visible in small state contexts. The Commonwealth plays a global leadership role in this respect – and one that fully reflects the former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Sir Shridath Ramphal's, accolade that education is "the jewel in the Commonwealth's crown".³⁰ The small states of Jamaica (in 1977), Cyprus (in 1984) and Barbados (in 1990) have already played host to Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEMs). Louisy has pointed out that there is much that the international community can learn from small states³¹ and the occasion of the 18th CCEM, being held in the small state of Mauritius, offers further potential for other Commonwealth members to draw lessons and inspiration from the small states' experience of educational co-operation.

³⁰ S. Ramphal, "Education: jewel in the Commonwealth crown", *The Round Table* 98, no. 405 (2009): 663-678.

³¹ P. Louisy, "Globalisation and Comparative Education: A Caribbean Perspective", *Comparative Education* 37, no. 4 (2001): 425-438.

Chapter 12: SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LINKING IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Nick Maurice

Introduction

School partnerships across the Commonwealth, involving teacher and pupil exchange and joint curriculum work through new technologies, provide opportunities for:

- A greater awareness of the Commonwealth and the shared values of its members
- The development of attitudes, knowledge and skills that young people and teachers require to live and work in a globalised world
- The knowledge and self-confidence required of young people to advocate effectively for a better world
- The professional development of those involved
- Greater social cohesion in the participating communities

Over the past twenty years there has been considerable interest in educational partnerships between schools and communities across the Commonwealth and beyond. The analysis that follows draws heavily on the experience of what has been happening between one member state, the UK, and other Commonwealth countries. This is because the UK has been particularly active in developing a variety of programmes and organisations for school linking in the past few years, and information is relatively plentiful.

Much will be gained if other Governments across the Commonwealth come to recognise the importance of school and higher education partnerships and mobilise appropriate resources to enable them to flourish.

School partnerships are about relationships between school communities (principally pupils and teachers, but often including governors) and in many cases also involving the wider community. Much progress has been made in understanding school partnerships over the past ten years. Good communication is essential. It may take the form of postal exchanges e.g. 'pen-pals'; or text messages via mobile phones and IT where internet access is available. If reciprocal visits can be arranged, this dramatically reinforces understanding between pupils and teachers in different countries and keeps the link strong and vibrant by building on established personal and professional relationships. As one South African teacher said:

An invitation to form a partnership should not assume you are a guest at the table. It should assume that you share the table and the right to plan and cook the meal as an equal.

The personal nature of the relationship and empathy or understanding between the partners is crucial. Beyond the value of personal friendships, and the sense of solidarity they engender, there are valuable educational benefits in broadening horizons of learners and teachers and through collaborative curriculum work. Most links now make the curriculum central to their joint activities, reflecting a general recognition that it is only if the partnership has an educational base that it is likely to be sustainable.

At primary and secondary level, joint curriculum work tends to be a major element in link activity. Schools are encouraged to embed the link across the curriculum and design and envision their projects together with their partner schools, basing them around the key concepts of the global dimension. Working together on these areas brings a vital dimension to children's learning and adds to their understanding of the global context in which they are living.

At primary level such work has included projects such as "What I see from my window", "School gardens", "My journey to school" or "People who help me". In the best practice, sustainability is built into the projects so that UK schools link, for example, their own school goats or chickens with those in their link school, sponsoring some animals in a pump/priming initiative and providing the link school with some real income. Projects such as these move teachers and pupils very quickly away from the notion that linking is to do with charity fundraising for their partner school. In the very best practice in secondary schools, whole-school take-up leads to a genuine change of ethos in the UK school with joint curricular work with the Southern school at the heart of the curriculum. The partnership may also include efforts to mobilise resources for infrastructural and professional development in the partner schools.

Overall the best school partnership programmes are based on an 'equal voice', joint and shared planning, teacher and pupil reciprocal visits, joint curriculum work and mutual learning. They may also be characterised by the availability of

opportunities for teachers to gain accreditation for the work they do through their partnerships. It is of course important to recognise that the funding often comes from the North, and with strings attached, so that true power-sharing can pose a real challenge.

Issues and challenges

Why do it in the first place?

An education system or policy perspective on this question would emphasise issues of global interdependence, and the need for international understanding. The challenges of climate change, collapse of financial systems, international trade agreements or genetically modified organisms, and diseases such as bird and swine 'flu, and HIV infection, are recognised as global issues transcending national boundaries. Global education helps young people to put their lives in the context of the world in which they live and enables them to become active global citizens. Once they have some understanding of the issues, they can be empowered to act. Educational partnerships, and school linking specifically, have been seen as an important means to 'bring the world into the classroom'. Global developments in IT and particularly the take-up of 3G mobile phone technology across the world have enabled access to all kinds of communication; these combined with the increased mobility of people across the globe, partially resulting from rising incomes in Southern countries, have greatly enhanced the scope of such partnerships.

In addition, international partnerships can offer considerable opportunities for addressing the social cohesion agenda in the diverse communities in which many of them operate, in the North as well as in the South. In the UK BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development), a Commonwealth-accredited coalition of 45 agencies committed to encouraging global partnerships across the Commonwealth, is running a programme of Building on UK Diaspora International Partnerships (BUKDIP), recognising that the African, Asian and Caribbean Diaspora often have strong links back to their home communities. The programme works through schools, health care institutions, faith-based groups etc to provide opportunities for the Diaspora to engage with and facilitate partnerships with counterparts in their communities of origin, which can lead to greater social cohesion. For example, a

Jamaican school teacher working in the UK, could be in a good position to facilitate a partnership between the school in which she is teaching and one in Kingston.

The individual school's perspective

Schools and colleges and their heads are already often over-stretched, having to meet targets, prepare for examinations and/ or inspections. Resource-starved schools both in the South and the North may struggle simply to 'keep going' with inadequate resources, poor infrastructure and lack of time. For them, international partnerships, while appealing in theory, may seem to be too much of an extra burden in practice.

The challenge is to gain recognition within schools of the importance for children of understanding the global context in which they live, so that the school partnership becomes deeply embedded in the life of the schools. If this challenge can be met, the rewards in terms of adding an exciting extra dimension to the life of the school, and to the pupils and teachers, can be immense. There are examples in which the whole ethos of the school has changed as a result of its international partnerships:

Despite the huge difference in resources available to our partner school in England as compared to what we have here in the Transkei, academic standards here are rising through the solidarity and the exchange of people and ideas and the process of reflection we have gone through. (Head teacher in a Transkei secondary school, South Africa)

Our international dimension is not so much 'something we do' as 'something we have become' – internationalism is as much part of our school as the students who attend it. Global awareness is crucial in preparing students for their lives beyond school. (Link officer, Polesworth International School, UK)

Teachers have been able to use their partnerships for their personal and professional development, and in school inspections schools have earned credit for their partnerships. Teachers will often remain in a school rather than moving on because of opportunities that international partnerships offer. This enhances stability.

The Global Teachers Award, devised by the Consortium of Development Education Centres and accredited through Liverpool Hope University, a

provides teachers with a qualification that they can take with them when they move to a different school and builds the capacity for school linking.

With whom should a school link?

Good sense suggests that schools should form partnerships with institutions abroad that are working at a similar level and age range to themselves and ideally of a similar size. It is useful to build on existing relationships and contacts that families and organisations or businesses in the local community already have.

An obvious first move is to explore whether there are other community-based partnerships through the local diocese, church or mosque, the local authority, neighbouring businesses, parents, migrant and newly arrived families that could help the school to form a link. If there is no obvious direction in which to look, a school may wish to use a linking agency or resort to a school partner-finding website such as Schools on Line.¹ Some UK schools have developed 'triangular partnerships' with partners in more than one country - for example schools in India and Ghana - or have linked with a contrasting area in the UK before forming a three-way link. Connecting Classrooms is just such a three-way global education programme for schools, managed by British Council. It is designed to help young people learn about global themes and become responsible global citizens, as well as giving them the skills to work in a worldwide economy. It offers school partnerships and accreditation along with professional development.

In whatever way the link has been initiated or formed, it is essential that appropriate training takes place at an early stage: it is very difficult to get a link with poor foundations back on track.

Resources

Partnerships between schools with very different resources, facilities, teaching methods, e.g. in UK and Africa, can add to the learning at both ends of the relationship. But disparity in resources also has its pitfalls. The expectations of the two schools may be very different. For a 'Northern school' the focus of interest in the link maybe that it offers a real opportunity for raising awareness of global issues and 'bringing the world into the classroom'. The partner school in the 'South', on the other hand, may see the partnership

more in the context of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals, and more specifically as an opportunity for obtaining much needed resources such as books or computers. If the link is exclusively based on the transfer of resources from resource-rich to resource-poor, this will inevitably stand in the way of schools working together on the basis of equality and will limit the opportunities for them to learn from the rich differences in culture, arts, history, economics, language and social structures.

It is therefore essential that these differing perceptions of the link at both ends are recognised. Discussion between teachers in both schools is needed. This may benefit from having an outside facilitator, and should lead on to the writing of a partnership agreement to be signed by both head teachers. The agreement will cover the basic tenets of what the relationship is about, and may also develop into a strategy for what the schools want to achieve over the next few years, what resources will be required to carry out that strategy, where responsibility for action lies, timescales for change and evaluation, i.e. how achievements are going to be measured, and checks and balances. It may be found desirable to put a time limit on the linking partnership and touch upon exit strategies. Much good advice is given in the *Toolkit for Linking*, published in 2007 by UKOWLA and launched by Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu.²

Sustainability

The commitment of the head teacher, the senior management team and the governors, and writing the link into a school development plan, are vital for a link's success and its sustainability. Southern schools will often be reluctant to engage with linking if those seen to be running the link in the UK school are deemed not to be persons of authority.

School partnerships have sometimes failed because they have been dependent on the enthusiasm of an individual teacher who may later move on to another post, so precipitating the link's collapse and disappointment in the partner school.

Involving the district education office and local education authority may provide opportunities to mobilise additional resources and bring in other

¹ <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/>

² <http://www.ukowla.org.uk/publications>

international networks in the area. Securing the participation of the wider community through the PTA or the governors can attract additional human, in-kind and financial resources to the partnerships. It can extend the educational benefits gained by the school more broadly, so contributing to greater social cohesion. All this will add to the sustainability of the link.

Whole clusters of schools, involving several feeder primary schools and a secondary school, may develop a collective counterpart relationship with groups of schools in another part of the Commonwealth. This arrangement broadens the 'stakeholder' base adding to the likelihood of sustainability and potentially enabling children to maintain a relationship with particular individual children abroad over the whole period of their education.

Impact assessment

Teachers and pupils in schools with international partnerships will talk passionately about the impact that the link has had both on their own professional and personal development and on the school and the wider community. The evidence for this was largely anecdotal until the UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded a study of impact on teachers and learners in all four constituent countries of the UK, in nine African countries, and in Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan.³ The research was managed by Cambridge Education Foundation and UKOWLA and carried out by the Institute of Education (who authored the report) and by Makerere University, Kampala. Amongst its findings was strong evidence that school partnerships provide opportunities for learning within and beyond the curriculum; develop students' understanding; challenge stereotypes; foster global knowledge and awareness; and create student-to-student collaboration across and within the partnership.

More recent research into school partnerships, carried out for DFID by the National Foundation for Educational Research,⁴ has demonstrated that pupils in linked schools:

- Had a clearer understanding of interdependence
- Were able to give specific examples of instances where actions in UK impact on those in poorer countries, for example in areas of

trade and the environment

- Tended to be more informed about the factors that contribute towards inequality amongst the countries in the world.

The research also found that primary schools had the highest scores on most attitudinal factors, while secondary pupils reported more awareness of development issues.

School partnerships in the UK

The context

The UK has a long history of engagement in community-based partnerships (CBPs), not just in education. As long ago as 1984 the UK One World Linking Association (UKOWLA) was formed in response to the growing interest in partnerships particularly across the Commonwealth. In many cases partnerships were born out of the publication in 1980 of the Brandt Report "North South – A Programme for Survival" which was one of the first to draw attention to the growing imbalance between the rich countries of the North and the poor countries of the South. UKOWLA provides a platform through newsletters, publications and conferences to discuss the underlying principles, opportunities and challenges that CBPs can provide.

In 2002 UKOWLA founded an advocacy offshoot, BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development). This is a coalition of some 50 international NGOs, devoted to bringing North-South partnerships into the mainstream.

In Britain, community linking is largely based on voluntary activity backed up by government through political encouragement and provision of financial support. The government departments responsible for education and for international co-operation have both been active in this respect. The former UK Department for Education and Skills (DfES) published its International Education Strategy, *Putting the World into World Class Education*, in 2004, stating that international partnerships between schools and higher education institutions are crucial to its strategy. Its later implementation plan for the strategy set an ambitious though somewhat unrealistic target that every UK school should have an international partnership by 2010. The Global Gateway website was set up

³ K. Edge, K. Frayman and J. Lawrie, *The Influence of North South School Partnerships: Examining the Evidence from Schools in UK, Africa and South Asia* (London: University of London Institute of Education, 2009).

⁴ J. Sizmur, B. Brzyska, L. Cooper, J. Morrison, K. Wilkinson and D. Kerr, *Global School Partnerships Programme: Impact Evaluation Report* (Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research, 2011).

by DfES and provided a partner-finding resource for schools across the world. This has now been replaced by British Council's "Schools on Line" programme. BBC World Class⁵ also provides a schools partnering service and promotes the extraordinary work that many schools are undertaking within their partnerships.

The structure of support

In the UK the majority of school partnerships have been funded through the Department for International Development's (DFID) Global School Partnership (GSP) programme, managed by British Council and supported by Cambridge Education Foundation, UK One World Linking Association (UKOWLA) and Voluntary Service Overseas. GSP ended in March 2012 and was extremely successful, resulting in 4,800 UK schools engaging in the programme by January 2012 although not all of these resulted in fully-fledged partnerships. In April 2012, British Council announced a new programme of support for established school partnerships under a revamped Connecting Classrooms but there is no provision for developing new partnerships.

Such terms as 'development education', the 'global dimension to the curriculum' and 'global citizenship' have become established in the language of education in the UK. One criticism of the UK programme is that it was funded from the DFID's Development Awareness Fund as part of its programme of Building Support for Development (in the UK) and was therefore often interpreted as being for the benefit of schools in the UK, rather than for the schools in the South, thus flying in the face of the underlying ethic of mutuality. This is despite the fact that most school partnerships develop a partnership agreement which recognises the mutuality of benefit to teachers and learners at both ends.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) in 2006 recognised the importance of raising awareness of development issues and set aside £25 million in funding as part of its strategy of "Building Support for Development". In July 2006 a DFID White Paper stated that:

The UK will double our investment in development education, as we seek to give every child ...the chance to learn about issues that shape their world [and will] set up a scheme to help..... build partnerships with developing countries.⁶

However the *Review of Using Aid Funds in the UK to Promote Awareness of Global Poverty*⁷ prepared for DFID in 2011, has taken a much more equivocal line, asserting (pp33-34) that there is only anecdotal evidence to support the idea that raising awareness in the UK of development issues contributes to reducing poverty. It concluded that DFID has a legitimate role to play in continuing to support the work that the UK's development focused NGOs are already doing – and will continue to do – in raising awareness. The DFID funded Global Learning Programme for Schools is currently being designed, and it is not known at this stage what form it will take.

School partnerships in other parts of the Commonwealth

Initiatives in other parts of the Commonwealth are generally less well mapped. But there are some better known initiatives, four of which are mentioned below.

Firstly, the UNESCO Associated Schools Project (ASP) encourages schools across the globe to become part of a network that focuses on four key learning objectives: The UN system and World Concerns; Education for Sustainable Development; Peace and Human Rights; and Intercultural Learning. There are currently 75 UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK involved in projects around one or more of the four study themes. UNESCO is also promoting higher education partnerships, particularly through its UNITWIN programme which has established 715 UNESCO chairs and 60 networks since 2007, involving over 830 institutions in 131 countries.

A second initiative is Link Community Development, which has offices in South Africa, Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Scotland, Ireland, England and the USA. Its Link Schools Programme has been running for more than 14 years, linking over 250 schools in the UK and Ireland with schools in its five Southern countries of operation.

⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/>

⁶ DFID, *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for the Poor* (London: DFID, 2006).

⁷ G. Dominy, R. Goel, S. Larkins and H. Pring, *Review of Using Aid Funds in the UK to Promote Awareness of Global Poverty* (London: Central Office of Information, 2011).

LCD's linking activity has sought to ensure school improvement impact in the South as well as development education learning in the North as a result of its partnerships. Whilst most of its linking activity has involved a European partner, Link has encouraged Southern learning exchanges across its programme work.

A third initiative is the Hope Development Volunteers' Schools Linking/Twinning Programme for African, Canadian, UK, USA and Australian schools. Since 2011 this programme has supported improvements in African schools.

Lastly, since 2010 the Canadian International Development Association has run an International School Twinning Initiative, which aims to engage Canadian and Southern teachers and students in a shared learning experience. This initiative provides an enriched, interactive learning environment to benefit both Canadian classrooms and those in partner schools. It aims to provide students and teachers with improved quality of education in the targeted subject matter, greater insight into international development, greater appreciation of their role as global citizens and enhanced ability to communicate international development issues.

The key role of the Commonwealth in developing school partnerships

The Commonwealth provides an ideal forum in which school partnerships can flourish: it encourages learning in a global context and has much to offer in the drive for international collaboration in education. The Commonwealth came about through international mobility and migration of peoples and constitutes a natural arena for the formation of school partnerships. Its shared language, history, traditions, democratic institutions, and educational structures offer rich opportunities for creating networks and partnerships. Indeed the majority of school partnerships are between schools in Commonwealth countries, very frequently including schools in UK.

The Commonwealth Consortium for Education, in association with LCD and other partners, devoted its second Conference in Cape Town in December 2006, prior to the I6CCEM, to school and college partnerships in the Commonwealth.

It explored ways in which partnerships can contribute to member countries' efforts to reach the MDGs in education, to broadening the education experience of learners and teachers in Commonwealth schools and colleges, and to strengthening Commonwealth bonds. In particular, the Conference examined opportunities for school exchanges in the South, within and between countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific.

Reflecting this, amongst the commitments in the communiqué issued by the Education Ministers in the following week, was their agreement "to encourage and promote school to school links and at other levels of the system as a means of fostering mutual understanding and to improve the quality of learning outcomes".

There is a strong argument that we are failing young people in the Commonwealth if they do not complete their formal education with a clear understanding of, and preparation for, the globalised world in which they will live and work. Pan-Commonwealth school partnerships can provide that understanding and preparation.

The launch of the Commonwealth Jubilee Diamond, an initiative from the 2011 CHOGM in Perth to develop a lasting legacy to the Commonwealth in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen, provides a new opportunity to develop pan-Commonwealth school partnerships, with a proposal expected to be presented to the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Mauritius in August 2012.

Each Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers provides a real opportunity to build on the agreement in Cape Town. A target that might be agreed upon is that in the next ten years: "Every school across the Commonwealth should seek to identify and work with a partner school in another Commonwealth country!"

Chapter 13: ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Peter Williams

A Commonwealth of peoples

The Commonwealth is often seen as primarily an international organisation. Yet its real essence is that of a community. It is an association of peoples as much as of states or governments. Strong affirmation of this came from the Eminent Persons Group which chose “A Commonwealth of the People” as the title of its 2011 report to Governments.

From its very beginnings the Commonwealth was clear-sighted enough to recognise where its centre of gravity lay. Alongside the official Secretariat that was established in 1965, the Commonwealth Foundation was created in the same year to encourage and support civil-society links - a radical innovation for its time.

The Commonwealth’s institutional structures are in fact comparatively light. The staffs and budgets of the Secretariat, the Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning, are small in comparison with those of the larger UN agencies or, say, the European Union. But behind the façade of the inter-governmental machinery is a wide network of semi-formal and informal relationships and linkages which represent the strength of the Commonwealth and are the channels through which co-operation finds its best expression.

The ties that bind the Commonwealth are partly personal ones of kinship, resulting from earlier migration of fathers, daughters, cousins and later intermarriage between migrants and the local population. Consequently many Commonwealth countries now have a multi-ethnic population with links to many different Commonwealth countries of origin.

Partly the ties consist of shared values of respect for human rights, commitment to democratic forms of government, toleration and mutual respect for differences of background and belief. And in part they are based on a common heritage of institutional forms and practices, elements of a common culture.

Civil society in the Commonwealth

Civil society consists of all those groups in society that are situated beyond the bounds of the state, the armed forces and the corporate sector. It embraces a whole spectrum of self-regulating institutions including faith organisations, trade unions and co-operatives, professional associations, community organisations, welfare bodies, women’s and youth groups, political and protest movements, recreational and sporting institutions, clubs and societies, and the media. Semi-autonomous bodies like universities, despite their heavy reliance on government funding, are normally considered part of civil society.

Commonwealth countries are generally moving along the road to becoming pluralistic societies where many different groups in society play a part in socio-economic development. They have a long tradition of encouraging voluntary action and, where appropriate, forming partnerships between government and non-official bodies to provide public services. Of course the degree of state centralisation in any particular country has ebbed and flowed, reflecting the changing political climate. But the general direction of political change in Commonwealth countries has been towards democratic participation and away from military and one-party rule.

Even where civil society’s role as a valuable partner in pluralistic democratic states is recognised, its position in society may not go unchallenged. Precisely because civil-society organisations represent countervailing sources of influence, balancing to some extent the power of the state, they may attract scrutiny and criticism. Partly this reflects their increasing engagement in advocacy, attempting to influence public policy and the disposition of state resources in directions they find desirable, which is never particularly comfortable for the authorities. It can arouse particular resentment if it is apparent that civil-society bodies are themselves not representative of their members’ views and interests and do not practise the democratic accountability they preach to governments. Local NGOs may also attract special criticism if they are unduly reliant on funding support from outside the country.

The issue of resources is particularly troublesome. The reach of the market is steadily extending into spheres of life that have until now been 'ring-fenced', enabling civil-society organisations to rely on personal commitment and voluntarism and to avail themselves of the services of staff paid at rates that would be uncompetitive in the market place. But the growth of consumerism, and the increasing tendency to equate time with money, make it more challenging to attract people to undertake poorly remunerated work and responsibility. Recourse to the state for support tends to undermine civil-society's independence; reliance on external sources can undermine an NGO's legitimacy; and philanthropists are in short supply.

On the international scene these trends have tended to widen the capacity gap between large international NGOs that raise millions of pounds annually from the public in industrialised countries for humanitarian relief and development activities on the one hand; and locally based organisations, often small and operating at 'grassroots' level on the other. A complication is that generous (in local terms) salaries offered by the 'internationals' make it more difficult for indigenous bodies to attract good staff.

The Commonwealth Foundation

The Foundation's role was briefly summarised in Chapter 1. Its programmes are based on working with civil-society organisations and professional associations in the Commonwealth. It supports civil-society activities that contribute to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. It funds inter-country networking (particularly among developing countries), training, capacity-building and information exchange. In particular, it targets activities that strengthen the capacity of civil-society organisations in their work on poverty eradication, good governance and sustainable development.

Every two years, at the time of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings, the Foundation organises civil society events to promote the People's Commonwealth. These include seminars, workshops, exhibitions and

cultural performances. At 17CCEM in 2009 and 18CCEM in 2012 it has taken responsibility for organising the Stakeholders Forum.

Civil-society engagement with education

Civil-society organisations get involved in education delivery in several ways. Even where education is entirely state-run, governing boards and school committees generally have civil-society representatives drawn from among the leaders of the local community or representing teachers' and parents' groups. Teachers' organisations (trades unions and professional associations) play an important role in education improvement and advocacy. In many countries governments look to local people to mobilise community effort for construction of facilities or to supplement state provision of books and equipment.

At the other end of the spectrum from the state school are independent schools. These may in some cases be businesses belonging to individual proprietors and effectively being part of the private sector of the economy. But in many countries there is civil-society involvement in school provision alongside the state. Not-for-profit faith-based organisations, charitable trusts, or local communities may operate education institutions as a recognised part of the national system.

In many more instances arrangements for partnership between the state and civil-society bodies are in place, and the functions of ownership of site and buildings, management, and financing being treated as separate functions and the subject of agreed assignment of responsibility. Thus, church or mosque schools may be funded by government, or state schools may be managed by civil-society bodies.

Partnerships with civil society bring certain obvious advantages for Government. Civil-society bodies are often closer to the people and the consumers of education and are an important source of feedback on education requirements and the impact of state provision. Participation of civil-society bodies in the conduct of education can mobilise a wider popular identification with, and support for, public policies. Additional



resources in money or labour may be tapped that would not be available to government through the tax system: this particularly applies to the commitment of voluntary effort. Civil society is less trammelled by bureaucratic requirements and can respond more quickly and flexibly than government to emerging needs. Civil society can inject variety, experimentation and innovation into state systems that inevitably tend towards standardisation of procedures and provision.

In moving on to consider Commonwealth co-operation in education one can, at the risk of gross oversimplification, identify four principal categories of civil-society organisations engaged in such collaborative activity:

1. Locally-based organisations in developing countries. Some of these, like BRAC in Bangladesh or the education secretariat of denominational churches in many African countries, are large-scale operations: but there is a myriad of much smaller NGOs based in single communities and doing local grassroots work. This sector is not particularly well mapped in most countries, but its reach and impact are often significant.
2. Voluntary and charitable bodies in industrialised countries that target their help on particular countries or projects or that engage in school and college linking with schools in Commonwealth developing countries.
3. Large international charities supporting education development, and increasingly engaging in advocacy. Many are members of the Global Campaign for Education.
4. Commonwealth professional and voluntary associations in the education sector.

The remainder of this chapter focuses first on the Commonwealth Education Fund, as an example of fruitful co-operation between local civil society in developing countries, large international NGOs and development-agency funding. It then discusses the role of Commonwealth associations in education and the Commonwealth Consortium for Education (category 4 above). It concludes with some observations about civil-society engagement with the official Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) 2002-2008

CEF was set up in 2002 by the British Government, and funded by it, to mark the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth. It was a unique education advocacy project, collaboratively managed by ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children and it operated until 2008. CEF worked strategically with civil society in low-income Commonwealth countries likely to miss the education and gender 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs), in order to make education a sustained domestic priority and to make public-authority schools work effectively for all children.

CEF promoted the right to education by trying to ensure that governments fulfilled their commitments through good quality education policies, transparent and accountable financial procedures, and quality education provision that reached the most marginalised girls and boys. The programme operated in 16 countries: Bangladesh, Cameroon, The Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. CEF focused on three main areas of work:

- Strengthening broad-based and democratically-run national education coalitions that had active membership across the country and could effectively channel grassroots voices and experiences into influencing national level policy and practice.
- Ensuring the sufficiency of education finance to make public schools work for all girls and boys, and that government budgets were effectively targeted and reached where they were most needed.
- Supporting evidence-based influencing of policy rooted in innovative work that had succeeded in getting excluded children, particularly girls, into public schools.

Commonwealth associations in education

Among about 80 Commonwealth civil-society bodies registered with the Commonwealth almost a third are active in education, and many of these are members of the Commonwealth Consortium for Education. More information on the individual Commonwealth civil-society bodies in the education sector can be found in the Commonwealth Education Directory published by the Consortium.

These associations vary considerably in form and function. Some, like the Association of Commonwealth Universities and Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa, have institutional members only; while others are open to individuals. They vary considerably in size of payroll and budget, ranging from those that have 40 or 50 employees to others that work entirely through volunteers. A number of professional associations receive a contribution to their core budget for overheads from the Commonwealth Foundation, but the Foundation is moving away from this as its preferred form of support.

As their Directory entries make clear, the functions of the associations vary. All have some kind of representative function engaging in networking among their members and in advocacy with governments and the Commonwealth inter-governmental organisations. Most have information functions for their members and the outside world. A number of them engage in training and capacity-building operations and run seminars and workshops. Research and publications are a major part of their work.

The creation of the Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG) in 2006 constituted a major reinforcement for this constituency, representing millions of Commonwealth teachers through its own member organisations.

Commonwealth Consortium for Education

The Consortium was founded in 2001 and formally constituted in 2002 as a group of civil-society organisations committed to education in the Commonwealth. It is a voluntary organisation with no paid staff employees. Membership has increased from the original 12 members in late 2001 to 18 at present, and in addition the Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Foundation and Commonwealth of Learning have the status of 'Special Members'. The Consortium received formal accreditation to the Commonwealth in December 2004 and was invited to send Observer delegations to the Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Edinburgh (15CCEM), Cape Town (16CCEM) Kuala Lumpur (17CCEM) and Mauritius (18CCEM).

The objectives of the Consortium, are to promote the development of education throughout the Commonwealth by mobilising the contribution of education-based civil-society organisations, and to constitute a forum to promote co-operation among member organisations. When mandated by its members, it acts as a body representing their views to outsiders, and in turn it serves as a channel for others to engage in consultation with them.

Membership is open to any pan-Commonwealth organisation in the fields of education, youth and culture, with associate membership available to other international or national Commonwealth organisations sharing the Consortium's objectives. The 2012 membership comprises 14 full Members, four Associate Members and three Special Members as shown in Appendix 1. There is at present no individual membership.

Officers serve on a voluntary basis. The Chair is elected, and the other posts are filled by members of the Consortium who designate one of their members to serve. An Executive Committee meets, presently in London, two or three times a year. Members pay a small annual subscription to meet office expenses.

The Consortium's activities have spanned the following five areas.

Commonwealth Consortium for Education: Areas of Activity

(1) Advocacy

The Consortium has made submissions to CHOGMs and CCEMs arguing inter alia that education development and co-operation in the Commonwealth should be declared a priority. This was achieved through the Aso Rock Declaration in December 2003 and the Valletta CHOGM Communiqué in 2005. Now, however, in 2012 the debate has re-opened with the proposal from the Commonwealth Secretariat that it might close down its own work in education.

(2) Project work

In April 2005 the Consortium completed a major project for the Education Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat on ways to make operational the Edinburgh Action Plan for Education with its six priority action areas (achieving universal primary education, eliminating gender disparity in education, improving quality in education, using open and distance education to overcome barriers, supporting education in difficult circumstances, mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on education). A series of seven workshops was convened by different Consortium members. The final report, *Implementing the Edinburgh Action Plan for Education: ways forward*, charts the extensive capacity of the Commonwealth in education, explores its comparative advantage, and identifies themes and issues for future collaboration.

(3) Advice

The Consortium was invited to be an Observer on the Commonwealth Working Group on Teacher Recruitment leading to active participation in the Group's meetings in Lesotho (February 2004) and at Stoke Rochford in the UK (August/ September 2004 and April 2009). The Consortium's Secretary continues to serve on the Commonwealth Advisory Group on the Teacher Recruitment Protocol.

(4) Conferences and meetings

The Consortium has organised and hosted a series of gatherings to examine issues of key importance to the Commonwealth, as follows:

- The inaugural conference in October 2003, organised in close co-operation with the embryonic Commonwealth Teachers Group, addressed "Retention and Mobility of Teachers in the Commonwealth". Its recommendations to Ministers helped to pave the way for eventual adoption of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol.
- The 2nd Conference in 2006 in Cape Town on "The Power of Partnerships: Strength in Friends: Exploration of the Potential of School and College Linking in the Commonwealth".
- The 3rd Conference in Bangi, Malaysia in June 2009 was "Learning to Live Together: Education for Social Cohesion", responding to the Sen Report, on Civil Paths to Peace.
- A session on "Networking Commonwealth people for implementing the MDGs in Education", as part of the Commonwealth People's Forum in Valletta, November 2005.
- A session on "Building Institutional Partnerships in Education", at the Stakeholders Forum in Cape Town, December 2006.
- A session on "Education for Transformation", at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Kampala, November 2007.
- A session on "Commonwealth Connections in Education", at the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in London 2008.
- A session on "Education for Peacebuilding", at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Port of Spain, November 2011.

The Consortium is also convening the cluster of sessions on "Connecting Commonwealth: Education and Cultures" in the Stakeholders Forum at 18CCEM in Mauritius, August 2012.

(5) Publications

The first precursor of the present volume was as a series of Commonwealth Education Briefing Notes, presented at the CCEMs of 2003 and 2006. For the CCEM of 2009 these were brought together in a single volume under the title, *Working Together in Education: a Commonwealth Update*.

The Commonwealth Education Directory, also produced by the Consortium is now, in 2012, in its third edition. Every quarter the Consortium issues a Commonwealth Education Calendar listing forthcoming meetings and other events planned by members and associated organisations. This also appears on the Consortium's website.

Engaging the associations in future Commonwealth educational co-operation

As described throughout this volume, the Commonwealth's infrastructure in education is extensive – more so than in any other sector – and this is true of both the 'official' and the 'unofficial' Commonwealth.

The potential for fruitful co-operation is a subject of growing interest, and various institutional mechanisms are in place to develop and extend the opportunities for civil society to make its contribution to collective Commonwealth endeavours. Examples include the following:

- There has been close co-operation between the Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth of Learning and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), the Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG) and other professional associations. The collaboration is especially close with ACU in relation to the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and with the CTG on the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol. The Secretariat has also operated joint programmes with the Council for Education in the Commonwealth (CEC) and the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM). In Africa, COL has worked frequently in partnership with the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA).
- The Commonwealth Secretariat and Foundation organise a series of bi-annual consultation meetings for an exchange with civil-society bodies, mainly Commonwealth associations, and the education group within the wider constituency plays an active part.
- The Commonwealth's education sector pioneered the opening up of Ministerial Conferences to dialogue and participation with civil society, by the holding of parallel forums in conjunction with the ministers' conference, as discussed in Chapter 2.

As the Commonwealth now examines its priorities and future patterns of work as part of the Strategic Review of Commonwealth Secretariat activity and the re-launch of the Commonwealth Foundation, there is an opportunity for a complete re-examination of the relationship between the 'official' inter-governmental Commonwealth organisations and their friends and allies in the civil-society sector.

The Secretariat has raised the possibility that it might disengage from direct involvement in education altogether, devolving its responsibilities perhaps to the Commonwealth of Learning and other partners. The Commonwealth Consortium for Education and others have argued strenuously against these proposals, claiming that certain key functions can only be performed by the Commonwealth's central secretariat. The Consortium has long argued that a comprehensive examination of Commonwealth educational co-operation, that would chart the capacities and roles of the different players and make proposals for better co-ordination, is overdue.

A review of this kind now seems all the more urgent. It would include consideration of the scope for devolving some of the Secretariat's existing work to others and exploration of new modalities for consultation and collaboration by all the partners. Whatever the final decision about the Commonwealth Secretariat's own future role, it seems probable that in the coming years a new partnership between inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies engaged in Commonwealth educational co-operation will be forged.

Chapter 14: EDUCATION ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH

Peter Williams

Introduction

The earlier chapters in this book have mainly addressed education development in the Commonwealth and its member states, and co-operative programmes to that end. This chapter has a different orientation, focusing on the theme of education for Commonwealth citizenship – learning about the Commonwealth and its member countries, imbibing Commonwealth values and particularly respect for other cultures and societies, and learning to live together harmoniously in a diverse international community.

Education about the Commonwealth, broadly understood, is important for the future of the Commonwealth, for the causes of international peace and development and for the development of democratic societies across the globe. It also helps learners of all ages to find their compass in a rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent world.

A very wide spectrum of activities, programmes and organisations have a role in projecting knowledge about the Commonwealth and its place in the modern world. Commonwealth awareness is nurtured by, for example:

- Major public events such as the annual Christmas Day broadcast by the Queen; and Commonwealth Day, observed on the second Monday in March;
- Biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (the CHOGMs) and associated events such as the Commonwealth People's Forum and Commonwealth Youth Forum, and the quadrennial Commonwealth Games;
- Visible expressions of Commonwealth co-operation in the shape of Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation projects, the programmes of the Commonwealth of Learning, or the presence in a local university of Commonwealth Scholars;
- Press releases and information materials published by the Commonwealth Secretariat and Foundation;
- Education and information activities of the Royal Commonwealth Society and other

civil-society Commonwealth voluntary and professional bodies;

- Cultural activities, such as the annual Commonwealth Writers' Prize presentation;
- Libraries and museums specialising in Commonwealth materials;
- Explicit learning, teaching and research that focuses on the Commonwealth in the schools and colleges of member states.

Increasingly today information-seekers turn to the worldwide web. Virtually all Commonwealth organisations now have their own website, that of the Commonwealth Secretariat being www.thecommonwealth.org. The Secretariat has recently created a web-based platform - Commonwealth Connects - to enable Commonwealth networks to develop and work together interactively by sharing knowledge and best practice.

All this adds up to a substantial volume of activity, but the many pieces of the jigsaw have yet to be assembled so as to form an intelligible picture. For although Commonwealth Heads of Government and Ministers of Education have frequently identified education about the Commonwealth as a major concern, they have yet to devise collective overall strategies and to assign responsibilities and resources for carrying them out.

Education about the Commonwealth thus currently represents a hole in the association's education infrastructure that a number of other organisations strive with only partial success to fill. At one time it might have been thought that the Commonwealth Institute in London could, if properly resourced, assume this mantle. Until 2002 UK Government funding supported the Institute's activities, which focused on teaching about the Commonwealth, mainly however in the UK. After UK financial support and oversight came to an end, the Trustees of the property decided to realise their capital assets and to use the proceeds to support a Centre for Commonwealth Education at the University of Cambridge, focusing on primary and secondary education and the training of teachers within the Trust's remit to advance education in the Commonwealth.

In the mid-1990s useful exercises were conducted, attempting to draw together the strands of Commonwealth information and education activity in two limited areas. In 1997, Derek Ingram's Review of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Information Programme was published.¹ It followed the 1996 Report of the Commission on Commonwealth Studies chaired by Professor Thomas Symons from Canada. The "Symons Report"² had a focus on research and teaching about the Commonwealth at the tertiary-education level.

Commonwealth awareness

The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group, reporting in 2011,³ deplored the lack of knowledge about the Commonwealth both among the general public and also among many government officials. This knowledge seems to be diminishing. It may well be that only a small minority could name more than a handful of Commonwealth countries other than their own, know what values the Commonwealth stands for, or are familiar with the practical development activities that Commonwealth agencies undertake. For many of its citizens, the Commonwealth connection that has shaped their present situation and status seems to be a matter of history. They are conscious of it as a contemporary phenomenon only when a CHOGM or conference of Commonwealth ministers meets in their country, when the Commonwealth Games are on TV, or if a Commonwealth programme benefits them individually.

Insofar as the modern Commonwealth is equated in the popular mind with the former British Empire, it is understandable that in newly independent countries people want to move on. It has to be recognised too that, unlike the UN, the Commonwealth does not have visible offices in Commonwealth capitals, and the resources it commands for collective development programmes are comparatively modest in scale.

Such perceptions, understandable as they may be, do scant justice to the reality of the Commonwealth in terms either of its significant role in shaping the societies in which

Commonwealth citizens live, or of its potential relevance to building a better and safer world.

The Commonwealth was born from the movement of peoples. Originally the drivers of this mobility were conquest, settlement and labour migration - including the slave trade - during the period of the British Empire. But since 1945 and the era of Independence, migration has continued on an even greater scale as people have sought better livelihoods and education in other Commonwealth countries; or have taken up residence either temporarily under contract with an international employer, or more permanently through marriage or refugee status. Consequently many Commonwealth countries have large minorities, born in another Commonwealth country and whose presence in their midst owes much to historical ties, and is facilitated by shared language, professional practice and institutions. Many Commonwealth countries have become vibrant multi-cultural societies, microcosms of an increasingly globalised world. Some insight into the Commonwealth's past and present is necessary for a person's understanding of his/her own place in the world.

The Commonwealth is highly relevant to the building of a better international community. Composed as it is of societies from every continent that embody diverse races, cultures and faiths, and at very different levels of economic development, the Commonwealth is representative of the wider world to which it belongs. The readiness for compromise and to seek accommodation of differences that has characterised Commonwealth relations is a useful asset on the global stage. The Commonwealth's own make-up of rich and poor countries enables it to identify solutions to difficult issues, respecting the common interest and serving the common good. It has been a pathfinder in pursuit of agendas of democracy, good governance, tolerance and mutual respect that reflect the principles set out in its 1991 Harare Statement and subsequent documents. Consideration is being given in 2012 to enshrining these in a new Commonwealth Charter.

¹ D. Ingram, *Review of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Information Programme* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Planning and Evaluation Unit, 1997).

² *Commission on Commonwealth Studies, Learning from Each Other: Commonwealth studies for the 21st Century Report of the Commission on Commonwealth Studies* (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 1997).

³ *Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group, A Commonwealth of the People: Time for Urgent Reform* (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011)



The Commonwealth could pursue a number of strategies to keep its profile before the public and to ensure that the rising generations grow up to be well informed about the Commonwealth association, and the benefits and obligations involved in membership, through, for example:

- Striving to ensure that Commonwealth institutions and activities are more widely spread throughout member countries than at present, and making strenuous efforts to reduce the over-concentration of activity in the UK;
- Giving full attention to public relations and to media-related work of all kinds, and better co-ordination of the media work and messages put out by the Secretariat, Foundation and civil society organisations;
- Using Commonwealth programmes and resources to spread the Commonwealth message. Outreach activity aimed at the general public, and at young people in particular, should be part of every Commonwealth conference and workshop. Commonwealth experts under CFTC, and Commonwealth Scholars and Bursars, might be encouraged and assisted to become informants about, and ambassadors for, the Commonwealth;
- Enhancing support from the Commonwealth Foundation and other bodies, including the private sector, for civil-society bodies that engage in Commonwealth outreach-education work, arranging conferences, Youth CHOGMs, prize competitions, displays and exhibitions. A few of these organisations and their activities are described in this chapter;
- Focusing on young people who form a key constituency within the audience for messages and information about the Commonwealth. In recent years a more conscious effort has been made to include youth activities in Commonwealth Foundation programmes; Youth Forums have been held to coincide with CHOGM, and in conjunction with Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers;

- Promoting education about the Commonwealth and Commonwealth studies in schools, colleges and universities throughout the Commonwealth. This is addressed more fully below.

Commonwealth Day

Held on the second Monday of March each year, Commonwealth Day provides a special opportunity for engaging the interest of the public in the Commonwealth. Each year a theme is chosen (see Box 14.1) and this provides the focus for activities, for the Queen's Commonwealth Day message and for a display poster that is sent to schools in every Commonwealth country. In many countries there is a special Commonwealth Day observance ceremony: in the UK this takes the form of a multi-faith religious service in Westminster Abbey in the presence of the Queen, the Commonwealth Secretary-General and the British Prime Minister. Many schools and colleges in Commonwealth countries also mark

Box 14.1 Commonwealth Day Themes

2007	Respecting difference: promoting understanding
2008	The environment: our future
2009	The Commonwealth at 60 – serving a new generation
2010	Science, technology and society
2011	Women as agents of change
2012	Connecting cultures

the Day with a parade or other ceremony, and children are encouraged to undertake projects on Commonwealth topics. Commonwealth West African countries have been prominent in marking the Day by special events.

Each year the Royal Commonwealth Society, on behalf of the Council of Commonwealth Societies, prepares a comprehensive Commonwealth Day Information Pack, which receives wide distribution. The Commonwealth Secretariat used to publish an attractive Commonwealth Day Handbook for Schools to serve as a resource book with suggestions and guidance for schools, and sharing ideas and experiences. The last appeared in 1992.

Education about the Commonwealth: what is involved?

The evolution of the Commonwealth and its contemporary membership, structures and organisation are a worthy subject of study in their own right. They may form a discrete topic within a syllabus addressing international organisations or contemporary international current affairs. In what tends to be a very crowded curriculum, however, the Commonwealth will often be studied obliquely - via, for example, history, geography, literature, politics or citizenship - rather than directly.

The study of citizenship provides a natural bridge to consideration of the Commonwealth with its emphasis on inter-cultural appreciation and tolerance, and mutual respect among people of diverse faiths and cultures. Education about the Commonwealth naturally overlaps with education for international understanding and global citizenship, with development education, and at tertiary level with area studies, development studies and comparative studies more generally.

Learning about the Commonwealth at school

As indicated above, there is a place for specific attention to the Commonwealth and its institutions in the school curriculum. In 1997 in conjunction with I3CCEM in Botswana the Commonwealth Secretariat conducted a survey on education about the Commonwealth in member countries. As was to be expected, in the countries that responded more work was reported in the area of citizenship and values education than of any explicit study of Commonwealth membership and institutional arrangements. Nevertheless some countries did (and do) make specific reference to the Commonwealth in their school syllabus.

Whether the focus is on formal Commonwealth organisation and membership, or more loosely on values and citizenship, specialised resources and appropriate in-service training are clearly needed to enable teachers and students to cope well with this part of the curriculum.

Formal classroom study of curriculum content is only one way in which student awareness of the Commonwealth can be inculcated at school. Student clubs and societies, and school international partnerships, can significantly influence student perceptions and experience. One major development has been the growth of voluntary Commonwealth clubs, democratically run by students in schools. Inspired by Nigeria, where more than 120 such clubs have been established, the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit obtained a two-year grant to stimulate clubs in secondary schools in England; but it proved difficult to raise further funds for continuation of this work after the initial period. In 2006 there were 40 clubs in Cameroon, and 20 being set up by the Commonwealth Society of Ghana, and others in Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya.

The Commonwealth clubs programme has worked closely with those promoting international partnerships and linking for schools. In the UK particularly there are many school-linking organisations and initiatives, as discussed fully in Chapter 12.

In looking to engage with people from different cultures across the world, schools are often oblivious of the make-up of their own local communities. Migrant professionals and other workers, international students and refugees may be present in considerable numbers. In many locations learning about the Commonwealth can thus start at home through contact with individuals and Diaspora communities. The student and teacher population of the school, and the community in its immediate neighbourhood, provide a rich resource for learning about the peoples, societies and cultures that make up the modern Commonwealth.

Commonwealth studies at tertiary level

There is a wide range of relevant teaching and research in universities and other institutions of post-secondary education and this was partially mapped by the Commission on Commonwealth Studies in its 1996 report.⁴ The Commission found there were no complete undergraduate degree courses in Commonwealth Studies but at postgraduate level there were a small number of programmes leading to higher degrees in

⁴ Commission on Commonwealth Studies, *Learning from Each Other: Commonwealth Studies in the 21st Century* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996).



Commonwealth Studies, Commonwealth History and Commonwealth Literature. In addition a number of programmes carried the designation 'post-colonial' rather than 'Commonwealth'.

Not all of the programmes bearing the 'Commonwealth' or 'post-colonial' label take place in Commonwealth countries, for there is wide interest in Commonwealth literature and history elsewhere. Within the Commonwealth, the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of London, with its concentration of research and teaching and a fine library collection, has always held a pre-eminent place. Although the Institute formerly tended to focus on Commonwealth history, its present offerings are much more contemporary, dealing with human rights and social and economic development. The Institute houses the semi-autonomous Commonwealth Advisory Bureau (formerly the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit - CPSU), a think-tank whose main concern is with current issues facing Commonwealth decision-makers.

The Commission on Commonwealth Studies took a wide view of the nature of 'Commonwealth Studies' and stressed that comparative study of national experience in a Commonwealth context was an important component. It emphasised the value of 'Learning from Each Other'. The Commission made a number of important recommendations but although these were welcomed by CHOGM in 1997 there has been no co-ordinated follow up.

Main actors and sources of support

Many different bodies play some role in promoting teaching and learning about the Commonwealth. Until six years ago there was an information centre and exhibitions at the Commonwealth Institute's Kensington premises where programmes were organised for school pupils and teachers. While the main thrust of these education activities was located in and directed to the United Kingdom, there was also some pan-Commonwealth activity including exhibitions and performances in the arts.

The Association for Commonwealth Studies was formed in the aftermath of the Symons Report,

and has held conferences on different aspects of Commonwealth development and culture including health, architecture, governance, and literature. In 2007 its theme was that of this chapter: educating the Commonwealth about the Commonwealth.

The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, a privately funded charitable body, until recently maintained permanent displays and temporary exhibitions about Empire and its transition to Commonwealth at its building in Bristol. The Museum had intended to relocate to London, but these plans have fallen through and the Trustees have now decided to gift the collection to the City of Bristol collection to display at the City's Museum and Art Gallery at a future date..

The Royal Commonwealth Society has promoted learning about the Commonwealth for young people in a variety of ways. It has been active in advocacy, arranging conferences and meetings to examine how the Commonwealth should address the challenge. It runs an annual Commonwealth Essay competition for school students throughout the Commonwealth. It supplies schools with teaching and learning resources on the Commonwealth and for secondary-school pupils organises a programme of 'Youth CHOGMs' involving young people in assuming the role of different member states in international gatherings.

The Commonwealth Advisory Bureau (formerly the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit), referred to above, has maintained a close interest in education about the Commonwealth and was the recipient of UK Departmental funding to promote Commonwealth clubs and to engage young people with the Commonwealth and its values.

Looking ahead

Concern by Commonwealth Heads of Government with enhancing the image and 'brand' of the Commonwealth seems likely to keep education about the Commonwealth and its values on the association's collective agendas. In particular the concern with promotion of Understanding and Respect has been a prominent theme of deliberations. It led to the appointment of a Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, chaired by

Professor Amartya Sen the distinguished Nobel Prize economist. In 2007 Heads of Government in Kampala received the Commission's report, *Civil Paths to Peace*,⁵ and endorsed its recommendations.

Commonwealth leaders will surely look to their countries' education systems to play a major role in efforts to address the Understanding and Respect agenda. Indeed, their 2007 Munyonyo Statement singled out "activities in relation to young people, women, education and the media, as the priority fields of action"

The Commonwealth Consortium for Education explored these issues in some depth at its Conference in Malaysia in 2009 and made a series of proposals for Commonwealth co-operation in this area which education ministers might usefully consider (see Box 14.2).

Box 14.2 Possible areas of Commonwealth action for development and extension of co-operative programmes, exchange of experience, and support for national capacity-building

1. Promotion of education about the Commonwealth and the values that it espouses.
2. A focus on education for responsible citizenship for children and adults to encourage active participation in political processes and service to the community.
3. Dissemination of information and publications about Commonwealth education policies and good practice in education for respect and understanding, with a particular focus on the inclusion of marginalised groups, and on language policy.
4. Provision of resource kits for curriculum development and assessment in the field of history/social science/civics and human rights education and of case studies for building socially cohesive societies, and facilitating the healing processes after conflicts ('Kits for TRIPS' – Teaching Respect, Inclusion, Peace and Solidarity).
5. Development and dissemination of teaching and learning materials, e.g. on 'Commonwealth heroines and heroes of peace' (such as Gandhi, Maathai, Mandela, Tutu), identifying role models in sport, the arts and public and community service.
6. Compilation of Commonwealth guides to literature, film and other resources that foster respect and understanding, the resolution of conflicts in different cultures, and the promotion of freedom of expression, critical thinking and responsible action.
7. Use in schools and adult education of the full range of resources – in literature and poetry, art, music, sport, drama - within different cultures, with recourse to museums, libraries and craftsmen.
8. Teacher education and professional development programmes to support teachers and principals facing the challenge of working in multicultural classrooms, confronting difficult environments for education, and tackling controversial issues.
9. Appointment of 'youth ambassadors for peace', including especially those from minority groups, and creating awards and prizes for distinctive contributions by teachers and students in this area
10. Encouragement to young people, with their interest and expertise in modern communication technology, to take advantage of these new possibilities to engage in contacts across cultures and other social divides, and to become agents for the exchange of knowledge and skills in the area of respect and understanding.
11. Promotion of a culture of accountability among policy-makers, managers and other leaders in the education system, requiring them to set an example as role models
12. Improvement of data bases at all levels of education on access and inclusion for members of different groups in society, including those defined on an ethnic, linguistic, social, economic and religious basis, so that the overall situation and the impact of intervention measures can be monitored and policies adjusted where necessary⁶

⁵ *Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, Civil Paths to Peace* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007)

⁶ Extract from *Learning to Live Together, Statement from the Bangi Conference organised by the Commonwealth Consortium for Education and Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia, June 2009.*

Appendix I: MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMONWEALTH CONSORTIUM FOR EDUCATION (CCfE) 2012

An account of the role and functions of the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, the publisher of this volume, will be found in Chapter 13. Currently the membership, which is institutional only and does not include individuals, comprises:

Full Members

Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS)
www.aclals.ulg.ac.be/

Association of Commonwealth Examination and Accreditation Bodies (ACEAB)
Email: ywright@cx.org

Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) www.acu.ac.uk

BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development)
www.build-online.org.uk

Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM)
www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/

Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) www.capa-sec.org

Commonwealth Association of Science Technology and Mathematics Educators (CASTME)
www.castme.org.uk

Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM)
www.cceam.org

Commonwealth Countries' League Education Fund (CCLEF)
www.ccl-int.org.uk

Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC) www.checinternational.org

Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG)
Email: ctg@nut.org.uk

Council for Education in the Commonwealth (CEC) www.cecomm.org.uk

The English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth (ESU)
www.esu.org

Link Community Development (LCD)
www.lcdinternational.org

Associate members

Commonwealth Business Council (CBC)
www.cbcbglobal.org

Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC)
www.cyec.org.uk

Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS)
www.thercs.org

Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL)
www.rosl.org.uk

Special Members:

Commonwealth Secretariat
www.thecommonwealth.org

Commonwealth Foundation
www.commonwealthfoundation.com

Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
www.col.org

Commonwealth membership and key indicators on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)												
Country	Year Joined Commonwealth	Total population ('000)	GNI per capita (US\$)	GDP per capita growth % p.a.	Net primary enrolment rate %	Adult literacy rate %	Life expectancy (years)	Infant mortality (per '000)	HIV/AIDS prevalence among adults aged 15+ years per 100,000 population	Personal computers per 1,000 people	Human Development Index ranking out of 187 countries	
		2010	2010	1990-2010	2007-9	2005-10	2010	2010	2009	2005-8	2011	
Antigua and Barbuda	1981	89	13170	1.7	90	99	75*	7		206.8	60	
Australia	1931 (Statute Westminster*)	22268	43,770*	2.3	97		82	4	0.1		2	
The Bahamas	1973	343	21,984**	1	92		75	14	3.1	122.9	53	
Bangladesh	1972	148692	700	3.5	89	55.9	69	38	<0.1	22.5	146	
Barbados	1966	273	15,034**	0.8			77	17	1.4	157.9	47	
Belize	1981	312	3810	1.9	100		76	14	2.3	152.8	93	
Botswana	1966	2007	6790	3.5	87	84.1	53	36	24.8	62.5	118	
Brunei Darussalam	1984	399	26,750†	-0.4	97	95.3	78	6		89.2	33	
Cameroon	1995 (independent 1960)	19599	1180	0.6	92	70.7	51	84	5.3	11.2	150	
Canada	1931 (Statute Westminster*)	34017	43270	1.9			81	5	0.3	944	6	
Cyprus	1961 (independent 1960)	1104	29430	2.1	99	97.9	79	3		383.4	31	
Dominica	1978	68	6760	1.7	98		76*	11			81	
Fiji Islands	1970 (left 1987, rejoined 1997**)	861	3630	1.2	92		69	15	0.1	60.4	100	
The Gambia	1965	1728	450	0.1	76	46.5	58	57	2	35.3	168	
Ghana	1957	24392	1230	2.4	76	66.6	64	50	1.8	10.7	135	
Grenada	1974	104	6930	2.9	98		76	9			67	
Guyana	1966	754	2870	2.5	99		70	25	1.2	38	117	
India	1947	1224614	1330	4.9	97	62.8	65	48	0.3	31.8	134	
Jamaica	1962	2741	4800	0.7	81	86.4	73	20	1.7	67.1	79	
Kenya	1963	40513	790	0.3	83	87	57	55	6.3	13.7	143	
Kiribati	1979	100	2010	1.2				39			122	
Lesotho	1966	2171	1040	2.2	73	89.7	48	65	23.6	2.5	160	
Malawi	1964	14901	330	1	91	73.7	54	58	11	1.8	171	
Malaysia	1957	28401	7760	3.2	94	92.5	74	5	0.5	231.5	61	
Maldives	1982 (independent 1965)	316	5750	4.9	96	98.4	77	14	<0.1	202.4	109	

* The Statute of Westminster of 1931 gave effective independence to the dominions of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

** Suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth in December 2006.

Malta	1964	417	19270	2.6	91	92.4	79	5	0.1		36
Mauritius	1968	1299	7750	3.5	94	87.9	73	13	1	174.3	77
Mozambique	1995 (independent 1975)	23391	440	4.3	91	55.1	50	92	11.5	13.6	184
Namibia	1990	2283	4500	2.1	90	88.5	62	29	13.1	239.4	120
Nauru	1968	10	2,802**				65*	32			
New Zealand	1931 (Statute W'minster*)	4368	29,695†	1.9	99		81	5	0.1	529.7	5
Nigeria	1960 (suspended 1995–99)	158423	1180	1.9	63	60.8	51	88	3.6	8.5	156
Pakistan	1947 (left 1972, rejoined 1989)	173593	1050	1.7	66	55.5	65	70	0.1		145
Papua New Guinea	1975	6858	1300	-0.2		60.1	62	47	0.9	63.9	153
Rwanda		10624	520	2.3	96		55	59	2.9	3	166
St Kitts and Nevis	1983	52	11740	2.2	94		74*	7			72
St Lucia	1979	174	6560	1	93		74	14			82
St Vincent and the Grenadines	1979	109	6300	3.6	98		72	19		151.8	85
Samoa	1970 (independent 1962)	183	3000	3	99	98.8	72	17		23.5	99
Seychelles	1976	87	9760	1.8	94	91.8	73*	12		215.9	52
Sierra Leone	1961	5868	340	1.1		40.9	47	114	1.6		180
Singapore	1965	5086	40070	3.9		94.7	81	2	0.1	760.4	26
Solomon Islands	1978	538	1030	-1	81		67	23		46.4	142
South Africa	1931 (Statute W'minster*, left 1961, rejoined 1994)	50133	6090	1.3	90	88.7	52	41	17.8	82.5	123
Sri Lanka	1948	20860	2240	4.1	95	90.6	75	14	<0.1	37.6	97
Swaziland	1968	1186	2630	1.6	83	86.9	48	55	25.9	36.9	140
Tonga	1970	104	3280	1.6		99	72	13		58.9	90
Trinidad and Tobago	1962	1341	15380	5	96	98.7	70	24	1.5	132.1	62
Tuvalu	1978	10	4760				64*	27		86	
Uganda	1962	33425	500	3.6	92	73.2	54	63	6.5	16.9	161
United Kingdom		62036	38370	2.1	100		80	5	0.2	802.3	28
United Republic of Tanzania	1961	44841	530	2.4	97	72.9	57	50	5.6	9.1	152
Vanuatu	1980	240	2640	6.8		82	71	12		13.9	125
Zambia	1964	13089	1070	0.6	92	70.9	49	69	13.5	11.2	164

< denotes 'less than'

Source: The Commonwealth Yearbook 2012 courtesy of the publishers, Nexus Strategic Partnerships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Producing this volume would have been completely beyond the capacity of a small voluntary body like the Consortium, had we not been able to call on the goodwill and practical help of very many individuals and organisations who were ready to assist, at extremely short notice and often at considerable inconvenience to themselves. We acknowledge with gratitude the contributions made, and the support given, to Peter Williams and his co-editor James Urwick by the following:

The **authors** of the different chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1 (Overview), 2 (CCEMs), **Peter Williams**, Secretary of the Consortium, former
9 (Teachers), 13 (Civil society) Director of Education, Commonwealth Secretariat
14 (Education about the Commonwealth)
- Chapter 3 (Commonwealth Scholarship Plan) **John Kirkland** Secretary,
Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK
- Chapter 4 (Distance learning) **Commonwealth of Learning**
- Chapter 5 (Education for All) **Steve Packer**, Education consultant
- Chapter 6 (Gender) **Casmir Chanda**,
Commonwealth Countries League Education Fund
- Chapter 7 (Literacy) **John Oxenham**
- Chapter 8 (STEM education) **Kabir Shaikh**, Former Director of Education,
UNESCO/UNRWA, Amman
- Chapter 10 (Student mobility) **James Urwick**, Education Consultant
- Chapter 11 (Small states) **Michael Crossley**, Professor of International and
Comparative Education, University of Bristol
Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General of St Lucia
- Chapter 12 (School and college linking) **Nick Maurice**, Founder and first Director of BUILD

Originators of the Cover photographs as follows:

Front cover: **CYP / © Commonwealth Secretariat**

Back cover is a photo montage of three different photographs by:

Background: **Keith Bernstein / © Commonwealth Photographic Awards**

Foreground Left: **Commonwealth of Learning**

Foreground Right: **Namini Wijedasa / © Commonwealth Secretariat**

Inside page:

Top: **Rebecca Nduku / © Commonwealth Secretariat**

Bottom Left: **D N Baraskar / © Commonwealth Photographic Awards**

Bottom Right: **Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK**

Staff of the Commonwealth Foundation and Commonwealth Secretariat for past advice and help with photographic sources.

Nexus Strategic Partnerships, Cambridge for advice and introductions to printers.

Lee Wayland and **Thomas Pashley** at **LW Design Ltd, Dorking** for the skill and speed with which they prepared the document for printing, and to our printers for their excellent service.

The Commonwealth Foundation for a grant towards the cost of printing.