

Commonwealth Collaborative Partnerships

To advance the 15CCEM Plan of Action and Edinburgh Communique

2 The 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (16CCEM)

6 Boys' Underachievement in Education: What are the real issues?

10 Addressing Education Sector Response to HIV/AIDS

14 Country Focus – Nigeria

16 Supporting Girls' Education in Mpika District, Zambia



Welcome to our newsletter!

Welcome to this 16CCEM special Issue of Collaborative Partnerships. This will be the last Issue before the 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (16CCEM) taking place this December in Cape Town, South Africa. We have a special spread on the 16CCEM for the reader to get to grips with both the theme and the parallel sessions that will be takes place alongside the main Ministerial event.

The Secretariat's work has been wide-ranging since the last Issue. June saw the hosting of a Pacific regional multi-grade teaching workshop held in Fiji and a Forum on education delivery to nomadic populations in Africa, held in Kenya. In August there was an official launch of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, French version, in Cameroon. Two separate events that addressed education sector responses to HIV and AIDS were also held in Trinidad and South Africa respectively, while the Education Section also worked in collaboration with the Secretariat's Governance and Institutional Development Division on a technical assistance consultancy at the National University of Lesotho.

One of our main articles looks at boys' underachievement in education and asks: what are the real issues? With a study on the phenomenon in selected Commonwealth countries (Australia, Jamaica, Lesotho and Samoa) now available, this

article presents some of the key findings of the research. Another special feature is the introduction of the new "Country Focus" pages. This feature allows a more in-depth look at current initiatives in one Commonwealth Member State through contributions by different stakeholders within the country. In this edition Nigeria comes under the microscope. Additional features include an article on Open and Distance Learning delivery to youths in Botswana, the work of CAMFED in supporting girls' education in Zambia, and a look at the implementation challenges of the new National Curricular Framework in India.

We truly hope that you enjoy this bumper Issue of Collaborative Partnerships. Many thanks to all those who have contributed over the last three years to the newsletter and we look forward to improving in 2007 with our new 16CCEM mandate.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue of Collaborative Partnerships. Contributions from across our readership for future issues are always welcome. Please contact:

**Education Section, Commonwealth Secretariat,
Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX.
Email: f.kelleher@commonwealth.int**

16CCEM

The 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (16CCEM) will be held between 11-14 December 2006, in Cape Town, South Africa. Held triennially, it will be the first time Commonwealth Ministers from all regions have gathered together to discuss developments in education since 15CCEM, held in Edinburgh at the end of 2003.

The theme of the meeting this year is Access to Quality Education: For the Good of All. Apart from the main Ministerial session, 16CCEM will also be supported this time around with three parallel events: the Youth Forum, Stakeholder Forum, and – for the first time at a CCEM – a Teachers’ Forum. Another new development for this CCEM is the introduction of the Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards.

Access to Quality Education: For the Good of All

By Alex Wright, Education Section

The 16CCEM Ministerial Agenda will tackle the main theme of “Access to Quality Education: For the Good of All”. There will be a mix of plenary discussions and committees, providing a forum to share experiences, best practices, and successful strategies.

The keynote address will be delivered by Professor Mahmood Mamdani, Herbert Lehman Professor of Government and Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University. Mamdani is the author of *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Origins of Terror* (Pantheon 2004), and *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton 2001). He is a chief advisor to the UN High Level Panel on Alliance of Civilizations for 2005–06.

Regarding access to education, some of the issues that will be looked at will include the sustainability of Universal Primary Education and expansion of the Secondary education sector. There will also be four ministerial committees that will take place as part of the Ministerial Meeting. These are:

■ Quality: The Teaching Profession

Areas of debate are expected to be heavily influenced by supply issues, teacher education and training, and continuing professional development.

■ Quality in a Globalised World

Definitions of quality will be explored. Questions regarding appropriate curriculum content for the current global climate may surface – what should national education systems be preparing learners for?

■ For the Good of All and the Non –State Sector

What does the growth of private, non-governmental, and faith providers mean for outcomes of national education systems (and ultimately the MDGs and EFA), both educationally and in terms of social cohesion, and for education as a public good?

■ For the Good of All and Equity

This committee will ask the question: How to balance educational and social priorities in education? No child left behind; special education versus stretching the most able; competing investments in primary and secondary sub-sectors; financing of the tertiary sector.

The Ministerial Meeting will also receive reports from the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth of Learning and will endorse work plans for both organisations and agree priority areas of work for the next three years.

Statements will be received from the Youth, Teachers’, and Stakeholder Forums, with the eventual production of a Ministerial Communiqué and Message to CHOGM.

Alex Wright is a Programme Officer at the Commonwealth Secretariat and is leading the organisation of the 16CCEM preparations in collaboration with the Government of South Africa.

Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards

The Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards will be taking place for the first time at 16CCEM in Cape Town this year. An initial 21 out of 47 applicants were chosen by a Commonwealth panel in April 2006 to go through to a teleconference short-listing on July 5th 2006. From that teleconference nine finalists were chosen to go to Cape Town to present their education good practices at the 16CCEM closing ceremony on December 14th. Six Good Practice Awards will be awarded in total. For detailed information on the finalists this year, please go to page 18.

Youth Forum

Meeting under the overall theme of “Access to Quality Education for the Good of All”, a Youth Forum will be convened as a parallel event to the 16th Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers (16CCEM) to be held in Cape Town, South Africa.

Within this overarching theme, the Youth Forum will allow young people aged 16-23 years from across the Commonwealth with a chance to debate education issues and contribute to the Ministerial statement of the 16CCEM – the Cape Town Communiqué. The Forum will meet from Saturday 9th December to Thursday 14th December 2006 in the same venue as the Ministers' Conference. There will be a presentation of the final

statement by the Youth Forum to the Education Ministers on Wednesday 13th December 2006.

Forum highlights will include presentations and workshop sessions that will address Youth, Social Identity, Diversity in Education, the disparate impact of HIV & AIDS on young people and their education, as well as provoke discussions on “what is a Relevant Education for Today's World” and the role for ICTs in

providing opportunities for learning. Youth Forum delegates will also get the opportunity to interact with delegates from other parallel events such as the Teachers Forum and the Stakeholders Forum. A key highlight of the joint parallel sessions will be the Pan Commonwealth Student and Teachers Internet Forum.

Two young people (one from each gender) will be invited from each Commonwealth country to attend the Youth Forum. It is expected that governments will include these young people as part of their delegations to the meeting.

Teachers' Forum

Too often in international gatherings that address education policy, the voice of teachers is missing. It is therefore a real opportunity for teachers in the Commonwealth to showcase their commitment by playing a central role at the next CCEM.

The Commonwealth Teachers' Grouping (CTG) will be organising the first ever Teachers' Forum at 16CCEM, to be held at the International Convention Centre, Cape Town, from 10th to 13th December 2006. The CTG gratefully acknowledges the assistance and support provided by the South African Council for Educators (SACE) in the organisation of The Teachers' Forum.

The Forum will include speakers from across the Commonwealth, as well as regional teachers' symposia which will provide opportunities for delegates to debate a range of issues. The keynote

speaker for the Forum is Mrs Graca Machel, who will address the importance of the teacher in access to quality education for all. Plenary speakers also include: Professor Audrey Osler, Director of the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights Education, University of Leeds UK; and Solly Mabusela, Deputy General Secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) on teachers as agents of change; and Professor Yaliwe Jiya, University of Fort Hare, South Africa; and Carol Adams, Chief Executive, General Teaching Council for England,

on teachers' professionalism and professional development.

On the final day of the Forum a statement will to be prepared on behalf of Commonwealth teachers which will be presented to Ministers.

The Governments of Commonwealth countries are being encouraged to send delegations which include a practising teacher and a teacher union official to attend the Forum. It is also recommended that a gender balance be ensured within delegations. Places are still available at the Forum and queries and expressions of interest can be addressed to international@nut.org.uk. Registration for The Teachers' Forum should be completed at www.16ccem.com.

Stakeholder Forum

The Commonwealth Education Stakeholder Forum which runs parallel to the Ministerial Conference will bring together representatives of various groups with an interest in education in the Commonwealth: academics, NGOs, business and labour organisations, national and international agencies and others. Some 300 education sector delegates will engage in discussions led by leading experts from across the Commonwealth and beyond.

The Forum will have both plenary and parallel sessions. While arrangements for the keynote speakers have yet to be finalised they will include leading international figures in the field on education. Plenary sessions will also include a joint session with the Teachers' and Youth Forums as well as formulation of a presentation to the Ministers meeting.

There will also be opportunities to interact with Ministers as well as Teacher and Youth delegates from across the Commonwealth at both formal meetings and during lunches and other social events.

Parallel sessions – which make up the bulk of the programme – have been organised along four main sub-themes:

Increasing Access to Quality Education; Globalisation, Development and Quality Education; The Right to Quality Education; and Resourcing/Financing of Quality Education. Within these sub-themes is a wide range of topics covering most of the major areas of education, including issues related to **education rights, equitable access to education (as well as alternative forms of educational delivery)**, educational quality, learning and teaching, education management and finance systems, and the relationship between education and society in an era of globalisation.

Regional Multi-Grade Teaching Workshop Held in Fiji

By Virgilio Juvane, Education Section

A Regional Workshop on Multi-grade Teaching for Commonwealth Pacific countries was held from 19-23 June in Nadi, Fiji Islands. The workshop, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat's Education Section in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Fiji Islands, was attended by representatives from Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Participants included professionals involved in multi-grade work at various levels, namely policymakers from curriculum development units (CDUs), teacher education, schools inspection and quality assurance services; and practitioners from teacher education institutions and schools.

The workshop was designed as part of the Commonwealth mandate to assist member countries develop policies and strategies to achieve MDGs and EFA goals and aimed to:

- (i) raise the awareness of education policymakers of the realities of multi-grade teaching, and its potential to diversify delivery of education services, particularly in 'small' schools in remote and sparsely populated areas;
- (ii) raise the awareness of teachers, whether, multi-grade or mono-grade, of the challenges posed and the opportunities for learning presented by multi-grade teaching environments; and to
- (iii) introduce Commonwealth modules on multi-grade teaching and assess its suitability for the Pacific education context.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to make participants:

- Understand that multi-grade teaching with adequate support can help countries to achieve MDGs and EFA goals.

- Understand basic requirements for implementing effective multi-grade teaching programmes.
- Incorporate good practice and principles in developing teaching and learning support materials, curriculum adaptation strategies, and teacher development programmes.
- Share knowledge, innovative ideas, and practice among participants.
- Identify the best ways of incorporating Commonwealth resource materials into regular teacher support programmes.

Officially opened by Mrs. Alumita Taganesia the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Fiji, Mrs. Taganesia recognised the significant role multi-grade classes have played in Fiji in achieving the Millennium Development Goals on universal primary education and expressed her belief that other Pacific nations would have had similar experiences. For many countries multi-grade classes have not been an educational experiment but an economic necessity imposed by geographic conditions.

Multi-grade in the Pacific

Overall, participants welcomed the workshop and the resource materials in multi-grade teaching. Indeed, it was stated that the Commonwealth decision to bring multi-grade teaching modules into Pacific countries was the right decision made at the right time because:

- Most Pacific Commonwealth countries have mid and long term development plans in which teacher education issues and curriculum reforms emerge as a policy priority.
- The following statistics reflect the coverage of multi-grade classes in primary schools:

Vanuatu	85%
Kiribati	70%
Tonga	47%
Samoa	26%
Fiji	52%

The geographic configuration of these small and sparsely populated islands, encourage multi-grade classes with deployment of 1-3 teachers per school.

Multi-grade teaching is a reality in all Pacific Commonwealth countries and it is gaining prominence with the move to incorporate it into in-service education programmes. However, as it was pointed out by participants, multi-grade teaching lacks a clear strategy and support mechanisms to make it effective. The only resource material 'available' is a handbook designed by the Pacific UNESCO office in 1992. The UNESCO module is no longer responding to the evolving Pacific education needs, and the Commonwealth resource material was viewed as a suitable alternative to address prevailing issues and challenges on multi-grade teaching.

Challenges

The five main challenges for the successful implementation of multi-grade teaching in Pacific countries were identified:

1. **Curriculum adaptation:** the current primary education curriculum, which has been designed for the mono-grade context, needs to be adapted to incorporate multi-grade pedagogic approaches. Fiji and Kiribati are already moving towards this direction.
2. **Timetabling:** the curriculum adaptation will require a consistent timetable in multi-grade classes to ensure appropriate sequence in addressing the different subjects/areas within the classroom.
3. **Teacher training:** it goes without saying that teachers need to be equipped with multi-grade techniques to enable them to handle multi-classes.

This applies also for mono-grade teachers as good teaching is necessary both for mono-grade and multi-grade teaching.

4. **Resource material:** apart from the module on multi-grade teaching, effective multi-grade teaching requires additional teaching and learning material for teachers and learners. One of the advantages of the Commonwealth module is its ability to provide ways/mechanisms as to how teachers can develop teaching and learning materials.
5. **Policy:** participating countries agreed that multi-grade teaching must be at the top of the sector agenda policy. In some Pacific countries multi-grade teaching has been already stated as a policy option in development plans.

Workshop outcomes

At the end of the workshop, participants shared the common feeling that the Fiji exercise has been crucial to set-up regional and country teams that are expected to impact on multi-grade teaching implementation in mid and longer terms.



Country teams produced action plans which will be submitted to respective ministries of education for formal endorsement. Basically, the proposed action plans define immediate and long term actions aiming to establish an appropriate framework to support development of multi-grade teaching at nation level.

The workshop has contributed significantly to raise awareness of participating

countries on the need of incorporating multi-grade teaching into policy documents and plans.

The Commonwealth modules were considered suitable to support multi-grade teaching in the five countries that attended the workshop. While some countries are keen to utilise the modules as they stand in the current format, others are considering using them as a basis to develop their own material. The information on the Commonwealth decision to produce the manual in CD ROM format was well received by participating countries as this option will increase accessibility of the material for a large number of users.

Virgilio Juvane is an Education Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat and Coordinator of the ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession

Contact: v.juvane@commonwealth.int

ComSec Mission to National University of Lesotho

By Henry Kaluba, Head of Education, Commonwealth Secretariat

Lesotho's Minister of Education and Training, Hon Mohlabi Kenneth Tsekoa, approached the Commonwealth Secretariat for support assistance in identifying technical assistance needs at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) in the following areas: General Academic leadership of the Institution; Governance, Planning and Management of the NUL; Raising and Sustaining Academic Excellence in the face of Challenges; and Financial Management.

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) appointed Dr Henry Kaluba, Head, of Education, Commonwealth Secretariat, along with an external consultant, Mr David Parry, to go to Lesotho between 1-7 August 2006 to assess areas of concern and to advise on appropriate measures of technical assistance that ComSec should provide to NUL in the immediate or medium term.

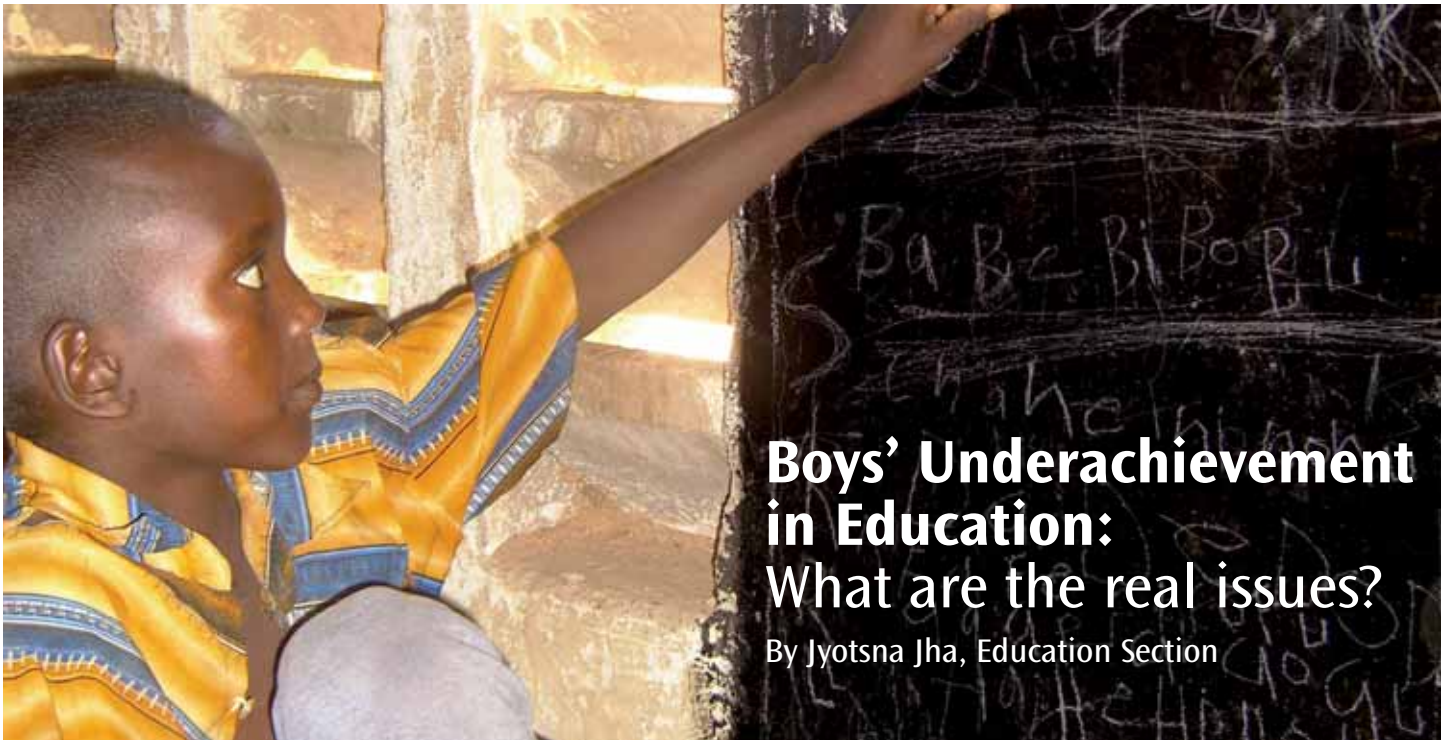
While in Lesotho the team held discussions with the Minister and his team of senior officials, and interviewed a cross-section of the University's stakeholders including the Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Librarian, Deans and Directors, and some members of the University Council. The team received a briefing from the Auditor-General's office and the office responsible for human resource development.

Several documents were made available for consultations and guidance. These included the new Higher Education Act, the National Education Strategic Plan, the University Strategic Plan and the University Prospectus for the current year.

After seven days of intensive consultations, readings and meetings, the team produced a draft report of recommendations for discussion with the Minister, the Vice Chancellor, and the Chairman of the University Council of NUL. The report was well received by the Minister and his team. The team has since finalised the report and submitted it to GIDD for further consideration.

Henry Kaluba is Head of Education at the Commonwealth Secretariat

Contact: h.kaluba@commonwealth.int



Boys' Underachievement in Education: What are the real issues?

By Jyotsna Jha, Education Section

While girls' participation and completion in education continues to be an issue in many parts of the world, a new trend is emerging in the Commonwealth; that of boys underachieving and dropping out of school. This is particularly evident in countries that have achieved universal primary school access and have high participation rates for both boys and girls. A number of Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean, Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, and some in Africa and South Asia, have demonstrated this trend to a varying degree in the recent past. A number of countries have expressed concern that it has become imperative to understand what the issues are.

Participation and performance are the two dimensions of boys' underachievement in education – underachievement being used here as a relative term. Under-participation when compared to girls (using enrolment indicators) does not appear to be an issue at the primary stage of education in any region. However, this does become an issue at the secondary level in many Commonwealth countries, especially in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Boys' under-participation at the secondary stage occurs in a situation of overall high enrolment ratios in these countries. A small number of countries in Africa and Asia are also experiencing this trend at relatively lower rates of overall participation. Underperformance of boys is another dimension of underachievement. It is not easy to assess performance as information is not easily available. Nevertheless, the available statistics show the following important trends:

- Girls tend to perform better than boys in countries where they have equal access to the school system, within each income level. However, even in

countries where girls are disadvantaged in terms of access, gender differences in achievement are generally small or insignificant implying that girls do not usually under-perform even when they have lower participation rates.

- Girls usually are more confident and perform better in reading compared to boys. The gender differences are usually not high in performance in Mathematics but girls are less confident of performing well against boys.

One of the immediate questions that arise is whether these trends are the start of a reversal in gender imbalances that will favour girls to the detriment of boys? But it is important to first ask: what are the factors that lead to boys' under-participation and underperformance in education? Especially as males generally remain more privileged in terms of employment opportunities, higher average wages, and higher access to most other opportunities – even in the industrialised western world – and continue to enjoy higher legal status in many countries

including those where these trends are visible.

In 2005 the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth of Learning initiated a cross-country research study to look into this issue and identify the causes as well as solutions. The study attempted to understand the causes by analysing the situation and reviewing the existing literature, and outlined solutions based on case studies of four countries: Australia, Jamaica, Lesotho and Samoa.

One of the problematic aspects of the debate on boys' underachievement is that 'underachievement' of boys is viewed in relation to that of girls, making it look like rivalry between boys and girls. Although discussing the achievement of boys in comparison with girls is unavoidable, the framework used for the study is not that of gender rivalry. On the contrary, the study views the issue as another manifestation of gendered social processes and uses the frame of gender equality to understand the trend.

The study reveals that while paucity of school places and facilities, along with social, economic and occupation practices, can explain under-participation in some cases such as Lesotho, pressure to conform to 'masculine' gender identity and the so-called 'feminisation' of schools better explains boys' underperformance in most situations. Underperformance leads to under-participation in many cases and in such circumstances, the pressure to conform

Special Education Needs • Quality Education • Special Education Needs • Quality Education • Special

to prevalent notions of 'masculine' identity also explains under-participation to some extent. Paucity of school places affect both boys and girls but leads to more adverse impacts on boys in situations where they face social pressures to join particular occupations as boys in Lesotho do. The highlands in Lesotho have a tradition of boys working with herds from as early as ten years old. These herd boys are one of the main groups that remain outside the fold of modern education.

Gender is a social construct and refers to the ways in which societies distinguish men and women and assign them social roles. Despite minor and sometimes major differences between societies, certain aspects of masculinity and femininity appear to be fairly universal. Men are universally viewed as warrior and protector, and women as care-givers. Masculinity is associated with physical and mental toughness, capacity to conceal emotion, sexual conquest and fatherhood, and essentially not being feminine. 'Not being feminine' assumes special importance when one tries to trace the relationship between masculinity and boys' underachievement in education.

The real issue is to break the notions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' identities and labels created by society

Formal education started as a male prerogative and women across different parts of the globe earned this right after much struggle and time. As such, one of the factors that explain the better performance of girls is the sense of accomplishment that is attached to education for women. However, societal notions of masculine and feminine have entered the education arena as well. The streams of education and professions that were considered most 'suitable' for women had their roots in the care-giving role and included subjects such as home-science, teaching, language and nursing. Masculinity, on the other hand, came to be associated with subjects that demanded either precision or 'application of mind', e.g., science, mathematics and economics, or physical strength and power such as sports. Since masculinity continues to be associated with 'not being feminine', anything that is considered 'feminine' is



not considered 'masculine' enough.

A number of researches in Australia, UK and the Caribbean have pointed out that the use of words with homophobic connotations start early at the primary stage and target boys for many non-sexual behaviours and preferences as well. A number of these words are used, among other things, against boys who prefer academic pursuits or who are interested in reading books and doing well in class or who are 'teacher's favourite' and choose subjects that are 'feminine' and so on. These have deeply negative connotations and serious implications for boys' behaviour, personality and performance in schools. Research has also shown that boys from more disadvantaged economic backgrounds are more likely to continue with anti-school manifestations of masculinity, in some cases drawing them towards crime and anti-social behaviour in their adulthood, whereas boys from middle class backgrounds eventually develop an alternative manifestation of masculine identity in the form of intellectual pursuits as they mature within the school system.

The case studies of the four initiatives include appraisals of formal mainstream schools in Australia and Jamaica, and non-formal applications in Samoa and Lesotho and provide certain interesting insights regarding the ways to address the issue of boys' underachievement. One of the important lessons that appears from the study is that school can make a difference and school leadership plays a major role. Committed and competent leadership and bold reforms that emphasis cooperation, confidence-building and conflict resolution go a long way. An environment that provides space for continuous dialogue between teachers and students through

mutual respect and equal behaviour helps in developing a sense of self-worth among boys, a critical requirement for better performance and achievement at any age. Reforming teaching-learning processes with a focus on active learning has also proved to be beneficial. Respect for students, irrespective of their age, emerges as an important factor that helps boys to develop respect for teachers and appreciation of teachers' efforts. In this context, it is interesting to see that the principles that are emerging as successful in contributing to the better performance of boys are also the ones that generally help any student, boy or girl, to perform better. The real issue is to break the notions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' identities and labels created by society.

Respect for students, irrespective of their age, emerges as an important factor that helps boys to develop respect for teachers and appreciation of teachers' efforts

Some of the popular literature on boys' underachievement point out that preponderance of female teachers deprives boys of suitable role models. Single-sex schools for boys are another approach often offered as a solution to boys' underachievement. The case studies do not provide any definitive indicators towards these. Limited evidence from the case studies reflect that it is not the presence or absence of female teachers, and the single-sex or co-educational character of the school but adoption of a particular kind of management and teaching practices that make a real difference. The evidence also showed that more deliberate and active engagement is required in breaking the notions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' identities. The study also identifies aspects that need further research to understand the phenomenon better and provide guidance for policy and programmatic options. The Commonwealth Secretariat intends undertaking further research in this area in the near future.

Jyotsna Jha is Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat on Gender, plus Education and HIV/AIDS

Contact: j.jha@commonwealth.int

Launch of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) French Version

By Roli Degazon-Johnson, Education Section

The Ministry of Secondary Education of the Cameroon invited the Commonwealth Secretariat to launch the French translation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) in Yaoundé from August 1-3, 2006.

The Cameroon government is promoting a policy of bi-lingualism nationally in a country which is 80% Francophone and, 20% Anglophone. The request emerged from the Africa/Europe Mid-term review of the 15CCEM Action Areas held in November 2006 in Sierra Leone. At that time the Cameroon delegation was led by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Secondary Education, Professor Ivo Leke Tambo, who was acquainted for the first time with the content and process that had led to the development of the Protocol. Learning at that time that there was the intention to publish the CTRP in French and Portuguese, the Cameroon Ministry who had not participated in either the development or the adoption of the Protocol, undertook to promote and disseminate the instrument through launching the French version.

The programme, which was presided over by the Honourable Minister of Secondary Education. His Excellency Louis Bapes Bapes, was followed by three workshops with ministry officials from the three ministries of primary, secondary and higher education, teachers' union leaders and academics. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was also represented by Mr Francisco Da Cruz Monteiro, Labour Specialist at the ILO sub-regional office for Central Africa in Yaoundé, who made a brief presentation to the workshop participants. The Secretariat has been developing a collaboration with the ILO in respect of the migration and protection of teachers and the relationship of these issues to the status of teachers internationally.

Each workshop had a different focus. The first addressed the content of the Protocol from the perspective of the rights and responsibilities of source and recruiting



countries, recruiting agencies and the teacher who is intending to migrate.

The second workshop specifically addressed the issue of the status of teachers in the Cameroon. From this session the following points emerged:

- **Education system absorptive capacity:** The Cameroon government trains teachers through the Ecole Normale Supérieure system and they are producing more teachers than they can afford to employ. The situation has created a surplus of teachers who cannot find employment and who are either obliged to wait some years for a position or opt to migrate overseas for employment to countries such as the USA, Canada and China
- **Private universities and teacher training institutions:** The existence of private teacher training institutions has led to vastly differing standards and varied quality in the teachers being produced. Some of these private institutions such as the University of Buea Faculty of Education are highly considered, while as others are termed "rogue" colleges for the poor quality and standards of their output.

A concern was expressed that the University of Beau was producing a high quality of trained teachers but that these teachers could not expect to find employment easily in the national education system.

- **Teacher supply at primary level:** Whilst there are many teachers who cannot be employed by the Ministry in the urban areas such as Yaoundé,

Douala and Bamenda, there is a great need for teachers in the rural areas. Figures discussed varied but some 13,000 primary school teachers have graduated since 1996 but there is a need for 28,000.

- **Bi-lingual teacher demand:** Given their French and English language skills, teachers from the Cameroon are sought after by other African countries. Many are known to be teaching in neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea and because the status of teachers in some of these countries is better than in the Cameroon, despite salaries not always being superior, there is a preference to teaching in these countries over the Cameroon.
- **Brain Waste:** Cameroonian teachers in the USA and Canada are finding it challenging to obtain employment in teaching situations and ended up being subjected to the problem of "brain waste", being employed in jobs beneath their level of competence and qualifications.

The third and final workshop explored a number of specific initiatives which the Ministry of Secondary Education would undertake in conjunction with other stakeholders present:

- **CTRP Implementation Working Group:** Establishing a working group to identify the ways and means of implementing the Protocol. This working group will address negotiations with government regarding the existing age limit for teachers joining the public service (35). As some teachers may wish to teach in a Commonwealth country as a continuing professional development activity for a period of time and then return to the Cameroon, encouragement of professional development for young teachers was noted and would be used in support of this negotiation.
- **Teachers' Regulatory Board:** A tri-partite board consisting of teachers' associations, unions, professional bodies and civil society would be established to address

the status of teachers and the need for improvement of conditions of service. This Board will also encourage the retention of the highly skilled teacher.

- **Awareness-raising:** Teachers associations and unions must employ strategies for raising the awareness of their members about the Protocol and the related issue of teachers migrating.
- **Teacher retention:** It was agreed that urgent attention to the conditions under which teachers served would address teacher loss and enhance retention.
- **Conflict and civil strife:** An addition to the Protocol was proposed which stated that a recruiting country in which civil strife and conflict erupted should effect

safe passage and return to the country of origin for the recruited teacher.

Following the launch, arrangements were also made to visit the University of Buea, four hours outside of Yaoundé. The University is an Anglophone private institution which has a large Faculty of

Education engaged in the training of teachers.

Roli Degazon-Johnson is Education Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat contact:

r.degazon-johnson@commonwealth.int



Obituary

The Commonwealth Secretariat extends deep sympathy and condolences to the family and colleagues of the late Deputy Vice Chancellor **Prof. John Ebanja** of the University of Buea who passed away tragically in an automobile accident four days after chairing the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth-supported Open and Distance Learning degree on Thursday August 3rd, 2006 at the University Campus in Buea, Cameroon.

ODL for Disadvantaged Secondary Learners in Botswana

By Godson Gatsha, Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning

The limited number of Form Four spaces in senior secondary schools in Botswana leaves many disadvantaged young people in remote settlements that have completed Form Three with very few options to further their secondary education. Post-Form Three options are either to attend private schools, which are very expensive and far away from their settlements, or enrolling for secondary education delivered through open and distance learning (ODL) methodologies.

A great number of these disadvantaged youths from remote settlements that spread across the Kalahari semi-arid and desert environment are from the San or Basarwa communities. Originally the first people of the Kalahari and descendants of the first inhabitants of southern Africa, their economic lifestyle used to be that of hunting and gathering. Partly for this reason, open and distance learning has been chosen by many out of school youths in most remote settlements. However, ODL has been a challenge to most disadvantaged learners. Efforts by the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) Kang Regional Centre have tried alleviating part of the isolation and remoteness that were a potential threat to most disadvantaged learners.

The provision of education through ODL by BOCODOL has gone beyond bridging

the education gap. For example, the vocational course – Small Scale Business Management – has attracted a number of out of school youths who have an interest in taking advantage of a government scheme for youths offered by the Department of Youth and Culture. The scheme provides financial assistance to out of school youths to start income generating projects as part of a strategy for poverty reduction and increasing employment even in remote settlements.

The biggest challenge for most learners has been adjusting from learning in a conventional set-up to learning at a distance. BOCODOL Kang Regional Centre embarked on a campaign that saw them not only carrying out ODL learner orientations, but sensitizing political leaders, NGOs, Government departments and local authorities responsible for the disadvantaged, and also sensitising the communities where learners come from, through meetings. Learning centres with ten or more learners were established with coordinators appointed and learner management teams elected. An NGO that runs the Naro Language Project and is engaged in developing and teaching the indigenous San language has facilitated the enrolment and retention of disadvantaged learners in ODL programmes for the Kang Regional Centre.

Traditional and political leaders have also gone out of their way to mobilize and encourage ODL learners to persist in their studies. Government social workers and Remote Area Dweller Officers have provided financial support to disadvantaged learners. These efforts have gone a long way in taking the distance out of distance education and have seen a number of learners making significant progress and registering for external examinations.

The partnership of stakeholders has proved beyond reasonable doubt that open and distance learning methodologies can be used successfully to reduce the circle of poverty as long as a conducive learning climate is initiated and created by the ODL provider and other stakeholders. Open and distance learning allows the disadvantaged learners to continue with their lives and to participate in leisure activities like they recently did at the 2006 Kuru Festival.

Godson Gatsha is the regional manager, BOCODOL Kang Regional Office contact:

ggatsha@bocodol.ac.bw

Addressing Education Sector Response to HIV/AIDS

By Jyotsna Jha, Education Section



Ministers Explore HIV/AIDS Education Sector Responses at CARICOM Meeting

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat convened the Ninth Special Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) in Trinidad and Tobago during the period 9 – 10 June 2006 in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago, and other key partners. The meeting brought together the Education Ministers and the Heads of the AIDS authorities from the Caribbean region on the issue of education sector's response to HIV and AIDS. Next to Africa, the Caribbean region has the highest incidence of known HIV and AIDS cases and small states are particularly vulnerable given their small population sizes.

The meeting emanated from a joint UNESCO-World Bank Mission held in November 2005 of which Professor David Plummer, Commonwealth-UNESCO Chair in the University of the West Indies, was also in attendance. The need for a joint effort in the region was discussed. Mr. Enwer Surty, Deputy Minister of Education from South Africa, was invited as a special guest to provide experiences and lessons from Africa and to deliver the keynote address. His speech and

interventions during the discussions were considered valuable by the ministers and senior officials attending the meeting. It also provided a good opportunity for facilitating South-South cooperation by the attending countries as well as other partners such as UNESCO and CARICOM.

Presentations were made at the meeting on the basis of several studies undertaken in the region or of significance for the region. Professor Plummer made two presentations based on his studies. The meeting ended with the adoption of a declaration by the ministers confirming their commitment to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS in the education sector with full attention and rigour.

Ministers urged the Commonwealth Secretariat to enhance its support to the issue of HIV and AIDS in the region. The Commonwealth Secretariat reaffirmed its commitment to support the issue and cited the contribution being made through various means including the chair professorship, facilitating South-South cooperation, and the activities being undertaken by the Commonwealth Youth Programme in the region. Interest was also expressed in taking this forward in collaboration with other partners.

The high level meeting was followed by

a partners' meeting where the representatives of the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNIFEM, ILO and the Commonwealth Secretariat participated. The need to continue and strengthen collaboration was decided, along with an agreement to disseminate regularly on individual interventions. It was also agreed that the agencies with local offices would focus on country specific interventions. The Commonwealth committed to maintaining its role in some of the regional activities and also facilitate some of the country specific processes.

Partners in the meeting: the World Bank, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNAIDS and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Workshop on Good Practices in Education Sector Response to HIV & AIDS in Africa

In collaboration with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Commonwealth Secretariat organised this three-day workshop from September 12th to 14th in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Africa continues to be the most severely affected region in the world and education is increasingly being seen as the most critical sector for prevention of HIV & AIDS. Education ministers from the Africa region in the Sierra Leone mid-term review meeting (November 2005) had requested the Secretariat for an initiative that facilitates sharing of good practices in education sector response to HIV & AIDS in the region. This workshop was planned as a response to this request. The specific objectives of the workshop were as below:

- A situation analysis on the impact of HIV and AIDS on the education system, including the role and limits of the education sector in mitigating the adverse impact – specifically in the African context;
- Sharing of experiences relating to education sector response to HIV and AIDS in the Africa region leading to identification of practices/approaches

Quality Education • Universal Primary Education • Quality Education • Universal Primary Education

that are effective and have potential for replication/up-scaling;

- Identification of pointers for future interventions in this area;

The workshop was attended by senior officials/academics/NGO professions from 13 countries of Southern, East and West Africa. In addition, a number of international partner agencies including ADEA, UNICEF headquarters, Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Education International were also represented making significant contributions to the discourse. The presence of Kenya Network of HIV Positive Teachers (KENEPOTE) and South Africa Teachers' Union added another dimension by bringing in information on the good practices that these associations have adopted for providing support to teachers facing the menace of HIV and AIDS. Speakers included technical experts, government officials, NGO and CBO representatives, and presentations varied from overall education sector responses, to specific country and programme experiences. Dr. K. Letlape, President of the World Medical Association, delivered the keynote address titled 'Time to Deliver: the education sector and the response to HIV and AIDS'.

Some of the challenges identified in the area of education sector response to HIV & AIDS included:



- Lack of a wider frame to guide the interventions leading to multiplicity of messages – sometimes inconsistent to each other – coming from various sources including government, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and others. This leads to confusion;
- Lack of awareness about the teaching-learning materials that exist at different national and sub-national levels;
- Ad hoc teacher training practices without being integrated in the pre and in-service teacher training systems;
- Ineffective communication of messages to students, parents and communities: especially in dealing with social/religious taboo & discrimination issues;

- Lack of effective mechanisms in education systems for implementation and monitoring of HIV & AIDS related interventions;
- Lack of systematic evaluation of a number of interventions leading to only a blurred understanding of what works and what does not;
- Multiplicity of organisations working for Orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) and lack of coordination mechanisms and guidelines;
- Lack of coordination between different departments/ministries/institutions /international organisations working on HIV & AIDS in most countries;
- Donor-dependence for financial and technical resources;

The workshop concluded with a number of recommendations for the Secretariat, ADEA, other international agencies, governments and other organisations. The following provide important pointers for future work:

- Need for more evidence-based evaluation looking at (i) Consistency of the Conceptual Framework (ii) Coverage and impact (iii) Cost effectiveness and (iv) Potential for replication and up-scaling;
- Need to facilitate and encourage the sharing of teaching and learning materials on HIV and AIDS and sexual reproductive issues that already exist in different regions within and outside Africa;
- Review, evaluation and dissemination of approaches to the training of teachers to draw on existing good practices/materials;
- Review, evaluation and dissemination of systems and mechanisms adopted by the countries to address issues dealing with OVC and mapping of organisations working with OVCs and development of coordination systems in selected countries in Southern Africa;
- Greater investment in building the capacities of local experts and institutions.

Regional HIV and AIDS statistics, 2003 and 2005				
Region	Adults (15+) and children living with HIV		Adults (15-49) prevalence (%)	
	2003	2005	2003	2005
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.5 million	24.5 million	6.2	6.1
North Africa and Middle-East	380 000	440 000	0.2	0.2
Asia	7.6 million	8.3 million	0.4	0.4
Oceania	66 000	78 000	0.3	0.3
Latin America	1.4 million	1.6 million	0.5	0.5
Caribbean	310 000	330 000	1.5	1.6
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1.1 million	1.5 million	0.6	0.8
North America, Western and Central Europe	1.8 million	2.0 million	0.5	0.5
Total	36.2 million	38.6 million	1.0	1.0

Source: Report of the Global AIDS Epidemic, UNAIDS, 2006

Jyotsna Jha is Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat on Gender, plus Education and HIV/AIDS

Contact: j.jha@commonwealth.int

Education for Nomadic Communities in Africa

By Fatimah Kelleher, Social Transformation Programmes Division

Educationalists and practitioners came together in Garissa, Kenya between 20-23 June 2006 for the regional *Forum on Flexible Education: Reaching Nomadic Populations in Africa*, to discuss challenges and strategies for delivering Education for All (EFA) to nomadic groups.



Organized jointly by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), and hosted by the Kenya Ministry of Education and UNICEF Kenya, the Forum brought together government officials, international development agencies, academic institutions, and NGOs that have a special interest or mandate in increasing and improving access to education among nomadic populations. Countries represented were Nigeria, Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Namibia and Ethiopia. UNICEF Somalia also sent participants to attend.

Nomads in Africa are thought to roughly constitute about 15 per cent of the population and are found in about 20 African countries. Historically migratory either as pastoralists, migrant fisher folk or hunter-gatherers, nomadic communities have had their own informal education systems for centuries. However, within the formal education system all the indicators reveal that nomadic groups are at the bottom of national statistics in enrolment, participation, class-room performance, gender balance, achievement, progression to the next levels of education and training, and also in mortality rates. Brokering the tension between the drive for educational modernisation with the right of communities to maintain their cultural nomadic heritage is perhaps the quintessential challenge that faces all stakeholders when debating the issue

of providing EFA to nomadic groups.

Generally, education systems in Africa are simply not equipped at present to cater for nomadic communities. The lack of teachers willing to work in remote locations is a key problem and there is still a significant lack of teachers who are drawn from within the community itself and can instruct primary school children in the mother tongue.

Many communities themselves also quote the lack of relevance schooling has for their way of life. Traditional teaching methods within the communities – whether it be through family oral lore or Islamic madrassas – are viewed as being more sufficient and relevant, but the absence of officially recognized schooling means that the communities continue to remain marginalized, disenfranchised and outside of the decision making processes that inevitably impact upon their livelihoods, such as land disputes, water and sanitation.

Officially opened by the Permanent Secretary of the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Professor Karega Mutahi, the keynote paper at the Forum “Nomadic Life and the Implications for Education Provision”, was delivered by Salihu Bakari of the Nigerian Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) on behalf of Gidado Tahir, Executive Secretary of UBEC (formerly the Executive Secretary of

Nigeria’s National Commission for Nomadic Education – NCNE). Professor Tahir’s paper spoke on innovations in delivery, relevance, and respect/tolerance of nomadic communities by government and educationalists. Discussion on cultural values, poverty and prejudice featured strongly in each of the sessions that followed. Keeping these in mind, participants at the Garissa Forum presented and debated the following thematic areas:

- Basic Education
- Girls and Women
- Teacher/Facilitator Education and Training
- Skills Training
- Government Policy PPEOxhwa

Within these themes participants came to the Forum with a view to understanding the status of nomadic education in Africa in terms of access, retention and inclusion, and within the broader framework of achieving EFA and the MDGs. A further objective was the identification of innovative success stories and flexible initiatives for possible replication and that of new challenges and strategies to overcome them. The Forum also provided participants with an opportunity to establish linkages and networks for sharing expertise and resources, and for future collaborations, along with a platform for raising the nomadic education agenda at future national and international meetings.

The session on Basic Education was extensive and included multiple discussions around issues of access and retention, the appropriateness of delivery methods such as open and distance learning (ODL), curriculum content, and making formal schools more accommodating for nomadic children. Mr. Godson Gatsha of the Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL) presented on ODL initiatives being used to reach communities in the Kalahari, while Muhammed Bello of Pastoral Resolve (PARE), Nigeria presented on successful collaborations between the Nigerian government and local NGO’s

Quality Education • Universal Primary Education • Quality Education • Universal Primary Education

towards education delivery for Fulani pastoralists.

The second theme on Girls and Women included presentations by FAWE Namibia, focusing on San girls' education, and the Nomadic Integrated Development Reserve Agency, Kenya, that looked at interventions for nomadic Maasai girls. A further Kenyan presentation by Jennifer Kere, Executive Director of the Women in Fishing Industry Programme (WIFIP), on "Gender Learning and Livelihood: A case study of women in the fishing industry", provided valuable experiences on factors relevant to migrant fisher folk communities, thus broadening the scope of the forum beyond pastoralism.

Teacher/Facilitator Education and Training included discussions on ODL approaches, curriculum development, quality assurance, recruitment and deployment issues, and continuing professional development. Presentations included Oxfam GB in Tanzania, who presented on teacher training in pastoralist areas and education provision in the Ngorongoro Crater, and current issues in teacher training and provision in Nigeria by the National Teachers Institute. The session on Skills Training included adult basic education, and vocational skills. The final session on Government Policy included experiences

from Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania. Each of these countries has sizeable nomadic populations but are at different stages of policy development in this area, with Nigeria the most advanced through the operations of the NCNE for over a decade, with Tanzania as yet at the very early stages of conceiving focussed approaches for their nomadic groups. Kenya's experiences can be viewed in some detail opposite.

Participants were also given the opportunity to make extensive site visits to locally-run non-formal education centres for girls from pastoralist communities, Islamic Madrassas and Dugsi schools, and a day/boarding school in the heart of the pastoralist grazing areas. With many participants being practitioners in the field, these opportunities for learning new approaches first-hand were very well received.

Participants at the Garissa Forum closed the final session by producing a set of nine Recommendations for Action. These included:

- the establishment of working groups/commissions or other organisational structures which have legal status that are relevant to the national context

that will comprehensively address issues and implement activities that are pertinent to marginalised groups including nomadic communities;

- the development of an integrated approach on current issues such as health, nutrition, water and sanitation, livestock, agriculture and other immediate concerns;
- the formulation of policies and strategies such as affirmative action and quota systems, which specifically target increased access to education for nomadic groups in countries that don't yet have them;
- the call for increased collaboration, sharing and advocacy through the formation of a regional association on education for nomads.

It is hoped that the Garissa Recommendations will be taken forward by each of the organising and host partners, along with the participants in their respective capacities, at the national and international level where possible.

Fatimah Kelleher is a Programme Officer in the Commonwealth Secretariat.

f.kelleher@commonwealth.int

Kenyan Experiences

Twenty five percent of Kenya's population occupy the Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL), predominantly leading nomadic pastoral lifestyles. The inhabitants derive livelihoods from livestock economy which often succumbs to draught, and families travel for long distances in search of pasture and water. Food insecurity is a common feature, with poverty levels estimated to be over 90%.

Access to basic services, such as education, water and health, are quite limited. Enrolment, retention, transition, completion and achievement rates are low in all nomadic areas, particularly in the North Eastern Province. Gross enrolment ratio for the province is 33.5% for boys and 18.5% for girls.

Expanding educational opportunities for children in Arid and Semi Arid Lands has been incorporated in to the Kenyan Education Sector Support Programme for 2005-2010. Ministry of Education (MoE) interventions include support of alternative methods of education delivery

such as mobile schools, boarding schools, and shepherd schools:

Mobile schools are currently implemented in Wajir, Ijara and Turkana districts. Multi-grade and multi-shift teaching approaches are used to cover a curriculum similar to that offered in the formal school for the first three years of learning before transferring to the formal school system.

Low cost boarding schools are a MoE project done in conjunction with communities, NGOs and other partners, to address the issue of long distances between home and school. The benefits of these boarding schools have included getting more girls to attend and serving as rescue centres during draught or migration. However, resource limitations are quite severe and basic facilities, such as water and sanitation, are a challenge.

Madarassas are a formal Arabic system of education with a well-developed curriculum, and Dugsi, a Somali traditional learning institution where reading, writing, memorisation and recitation of the Quran is taught.

These institutions have been successful in promoting literacy. However, there needs to be improvement in the teaching methodology away from rote learning and recitation, as well as improved gender responsiveness in favour of girls.

Shepherd Schools are another method, aimed at offering basic literacy, arithmetic and life skills. The ASAL districts have 18 centres staffed by 27 voluntary teachers. These face challenges such as a lack of standard curriculum, herd raiding, and other cultural practices that affect learning and teaching processes.

The Kenyan MoE has evaluated the need to employ integrated approaches which combine educational provision with services such as water, rural development, agriculture, health, nutrition, and sanitation. More successful models of education provision to nomads involve a mixture of formal and alternative methods of delivery, and one way forward would be to establish linkages between these in the future.

COUNTRY FOCUS



Nigeria

COUNTRY FOCUS is a new feature in Collaborative Partnerships aimed at providing a better understanding of education initiatives and projects happening in our member countries. Each Issue, one Commonwealth country will be featured through articles by contributors from government organs and/or other in-country agencies on their current endeavours towards attaining quality education for all. Our first candidate for this new feature is Nigeria. Articles have been provided by the Universal Basic Education Commission on their mandate towards achieving full access, and another on the newly activated Federal Teachers Scheme. There is also an update on the DFID/UNICEF Girls' Education Project taken from a recently produced brief kindly forwarded to us by UNICEF Nigeria.

Nigeria's UBE Programme: Working Towards Universal Access

By Gidado Tahir, Universal Basic Education Commission, Nigeria

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme was launched in September 1999 by the Obasanjo Administration as a reform measure aimed at addressing inequality in educational opportunity and improving the quality of provision. The Federal Government was concerned that states and local governments, which are constitutionally responsible for basic education delivery, were unable to effectively drive and ensure unhindered access to quality, basic education. Resorting to constitutional provisions which empower it to set and maintain standards in education, the Federal Government enacted the Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act, 2004. The UBE programme aims at ensuring an uninterrupted access to 9-year formal education by providing free, compulsory basic education for every child of school age. The programme covers: (i) Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE), (ii) six years of primary education; and (iii) three years of junior secondary education

The UBE Act 2004 also provides for widening access by:

- (1) abrogating all forms of fees;
- (2) sanctioning failure to enrol a child in school and/or for charging fees in public schools;
- (3) provision of mid-day meal in schools;
- (4) Federal Government financial and other forms of assistance as intervention only to state governments in basic education delivery; and

- (5) delineating roles and sharing responsibility in basic education delivery so that each stakeholder is aware of its functions and what is expected of it by the law.

Funding of the Programme

The UBE programme is partly financed through 2% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) of the Federal Government. This amount translates into N 30 billion (USD 240 million) in the 2006 Appropriation. Participating States, on the other hand, contribute 70% of the total Federal Government intervention funds as Matching Grants. This is significant in that it is the first time in the history of Nigeria that both tiers of government have collaboratively agreed to commit such huge financial investment to the basic education sub-sector in a systematic way.

Emerging Results

In 2005, states constructed and/or rehabilitated 6,736 blocks of classrooms, 1,191 toilets, sank 210 boreholes, and procured and distributed 2, 677, 914 copies of textbooks in Science, Mathematics, Social Studies and English language in schools.

The Federal Government has also recently introduced the Federal Teachers Scheme, a programme that would recruit 40,000 NCE teachers and deploy them to States requiring their services. In terms of teacher development, in the year 2005 alone, 13,075 ECCDE teachers and caregivers, 123, 424 primary school teachers and 24, 619 Junior Secondary School teachers



had gone through variety of professional development programmes. The training will be on-going.

The UBE reform programme has also realised the indispensable role of community participation in basic education delivery. To this end, the Federal Government has earmarked the 14% of the 2% Consolidated Revenue Fund, i.e. \$ 24.3 million and \$ 30 million for 2005 and 2006 respectively to address educational imbalance within and among states and local governments through community self-help projects. So far, the first tranche of the 2005 community self-help funds involving 4,407 communities have reached advanced stages of implementation.

Gidado Tahir is the Executive Secretary of the Universal Basic Education Commission, Nigeria

The DFID/UNICEF Girls' Education Project

From a UNICEF Report

The Girls' Education Project (GEP) in Nigeria (2004-2007) is the largest DFID funded/UNICEF managed Girls' Education Project in the world, with £26 million of DFID funding over three years. Its principal objective is to get Nigeria back on track to achieving the MDGs, especially the gender equity and EFA targets. While many states in Nigeria have achieved gender parity the national Gross Enrolment Gender Gap still stands at nearly 16% (School Census, 2005) and overall Net Attendance Ratios in Northern Nigeria are around 43% (2004 Nigeria DHS EdData Survey) with a gender gap in excess of 40% in some states (School Census, 2005). This is why GEP focuses on six of the states with the largest gender gaps in Nigeria: Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto.

The first Output to Purpose review (OPR) of GEP (March 2006), was very encouraging, noting: "The main outputs that can reasonably be measured at this early stage, girls' increased enrolment and attendance, are being achieved". Indeed the report goes on to say that: "Girls' school

enrolments are up by 10% or more ...in the GEP schools actual girls' attendance is up by over 25% (with about 12,000 more girls regularly attending school than before) and gender gaps are about two thirds of their previous levels".

Project activities are focused at state and local government levels. The project also works with non-state providers, especially with Islamiyya schools. Fittingly, the GEP communication strategy is driven by traditional and religious leaders, who consistently reinforce the key message that educating all children is a religious duty, drawing on evidence from the Qur'an and other religious texts.

GEP is grounded in a wider partnership represented by the Nigeria Girls' Education Initiative which was launched in 2005. As a result, Government ownership has been strong. Federal Ministers of Education have carried out high profile advocacy visits to the GEP states with their UNICEF and DFID counterparts, including meetings with state governors and leading Islamic figures, such as the



Sultan of Sokoto. State commitment has also been generally very high, as evidenced by the release of substantial amounts of state funds earmarked specifically for girls' education or complementary classroom construction and textbooks.

GEP has also had impact beyond the six GEP states with many other Northern states now vying for inclusion. The OPR recommended that plans should be developed for an extension of GEP up to 2010, as GEP is clearly having impact where it is most needed in an area of Nigeria where the enrolment of boys and girls is far below Sub-Saharan African norms. With 20% of population of Sub-Saharan Africa residing in Nigeria, GEP's impact has continental implications.

Federal Teachers Scheme

By Kabiru Isyaku, Federal Teachers Scheme

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 2004 prescribes the Nigeria Certificate in Education – a 3-year post secondary teacher training programme – as the minimum qualification for entry into teaching. Among the 600,996 teachers currently in primary schools only 280,122 are qualified. These are present unevenly across the country and although some states will have an overspill of qualified teachers while others lack, most Nigerian states do not like recruiting qualified teachers from other states. This creates a situation of both surplus and scarcity of teachers due to lack of mobility.

In response to the above challenges, the Government initiated the Federal Teachers Scheme. The Scheme is planned to last two years in the first instance and will be funded by the Federal Government using funds from the debt relief gains. It involves the recruitment of 40,000 qualified teachers from the surpluses that have not been able to secure jobs and deploys them to primary schools anywhere in the country where they are needed to boost the quality of the teaching force. The teachers will also conduct literacy classes.

The Federal Government will cover about 85% of their allowances while the receiving state will pay the balance in the form of accommodation or allowances in lieu. The teachers in the Scheme will serve for two years after which it is hoped the states will see their worth and absorb them. It is hoped that the Scheme will not only assist in the area of poverty alleviation by offering jobs to 40,000 youths, it will also engender national integration.

A team within each state will do monthly inspection of the teachers in the Scheme

using nationally designed check-lists. This team will be comprised of members from State Universal Basic Education Boards, National Teachers Institute, Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Federal Ministry of Education, Nigerian Union of Teachers and Colleges of Education. There will be another team that will do quarterly supervision. It is also planned that there will be independent committee of experts to also review the Scheme mid-way.

The Scheme will provide valuable information on the jobless but qualified teachers. There are also plans to further give the teachers additional training in key emerging areas like ICT. Another benefit of the scheme is that the participants would have obtained teaching experiences to make them fully registrable at higher level by the TRCN as professional teachers.

Kabiru Isyaku is the Coordinator of the Federal Teachers Scheme and National Coordinator of the Teacher Training Institute for Sub-Saharan Africa, UNESCO

Supporting Girls' Education in Mpika District, Zambia

Adapted from a CAMFED report



In order to achieve sustainable social change through girls' education, direct support for school-going costs is the essential first step. Education takes time and CAMFED commits to support girls to complete their entire secondary education. Support that only enables a girl to get one or two years of schooling or offers an incomplete package of support does not guarantee the high levels of completion, attendance and performance that are needed. All the research shows that girls who do not have a secondary education are more likely to seek to support themselves and their dependents in the only way available to them: by selling sex and risking their health and lives in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. With a strong infrastructure of community coalitions mobilised for girls' education and a close working partnership with the Zambia Ministry of Education, CAMFED has used Commonwealth Secretariat support to put girls through school, resulting in a group of confident, independent and economically active young women leading community development across their rural districts.

CAMFED has worked in sub-Saharan Africa since 1993, and Zambia since 2001, fighting poverty and HIV/AIDS by educating girls. The organisation supports girls in rural areas to complete primary and secondary education and help school leavers to become the next generation of social and business entrepreneurs. Working in partnership with existing community structures – schools, local education and health authorities, traditional leadership figures and parents and guardians in individual families, the program does not create parallel bureaucracies, but rather invests in the skills, knowledge and capacity of those already working to improve girls' lives.

The young women supported through school by CAMFED are now sharing the benefits of their education with their communities. They have set up their own pan-African organisation, CAMA (the CAMFED Association), which boasts more than 4,700 members – among them doctors, lawyers, nurses, local businesswomen and teachers. The majority of CAMA members run rural businesses, achieving economic independence while simultaneously providing necessary goods and services and becoming role models for the younger generation. In the last year alone, 16,226 children were supported to go to school by members of CAMA, in partnership with other community groups. The philanthropy and activism of these young women is giving thousands more children the opportunity of an education and sustaining a cycle of change.

Mpika District is located in the Northern Province of Zambia. Here, as in other districts, the programme is coordinated by a Community Development Committee (CDC) which draws together representatives from local authorities and was set up by CAMFED to provide a broad base of support for girls' education in the district. This is an inclusive group comprised of head teachers, traditional leaders, parents, local health and education officials and young educated women.

CAMFED supports the CDC with training in leadership, advocacy, monitoring and financial management to build community problem-solving and lobbying capabilities. The significance of the inclusion of educated young women in CDCs cannot be underestimated in a context where few women have traditionally been represented on decision-making bodies.

The Barrier of School Fees: Jenipher's Story

Jenipher Mpundu comes from Dick Village in Mpika. Currently in Grade 10 at Chinsali Girls High School, she excels in her studies and serves as a role model for others in her village. The path to secondary school, however, has not been an easy one for her.

In Grade 5, Jenipher's elderly parents began to have financial problems and needed more help at home. As a result, she started arriving late to school and on many days wasn't able to attend at all. The school became concerned and a female teacher volunteered to take Jenipher to live with her. Under the guidance and counselling of this teacher Jenipher once again flourished in school only to face more obstacles upon completing Grade 7. Although she successfully passed her grade seven exams and qualified for Lwitikila Girls' Secondary School, relatives of the teacher sponsoring her objected to the financial and moral support she was receiving. They claimed it took away from other children in the family and the teacher was forced to stop supporting Jenipher. Unable to afford secondary school on her own, she had no choice but to return to her village.

The SBC in Jenipher's community became aware of her situation and recommended her for a CAMFED bursary. Thanks to grants from organisation's like the Commonwealth Secretariat, Jenipher was not only able to finally start secondary school, but she can also rest assured that she will have the financial support to complete it.

Special Education Needs • Quality Education • Special Education Needs • Quality Education • Special

In the first half of 2006 CAMFED bursaries enabled 258 girls to attend school in Mpika, 60 of whom were funded directly through the support CAMFED received from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Over 1,000 other children, girls and boys, were reached through Safety Net Funds, distributed by schools to students who may need help buying supplies, such as books and uniforms. Without this financial assistance, many of these children would be forced to drop out of school.

Mentoring is also a key component for reaching the target group of young rural women and thus, after girls finish or leave school, CAMA, CAMFED's alumni association, works to provide

them with further training and support. The mentoring with CAMA Zambia network extends the friendship and support circle beyond school and builds critical peer relationships in a context where young women are traditionally disempowered and excluded from community debate and decision-making.

In the next six months, CAMFED will continue to work toward empowering young women in rural Zambia through education and training. Bursaries for direct school costs will continue to fund primary and secondary school students in the Mpika District, with the Commonwealth Secretariat's support being directly responsible for the funding of 60 of those girls.

World Teachers' Day

World Teachers' Day 2006 was celebrated at the Commonwealth Secretariat on Thursday, October 5th with a tribute to the Teachers of the Commonwealth on the theme "Optimising Commonwealth Teacher Potential". The event was organised by the Secretariat in conjunction with the Commonwealth Teachers' Grouping and the National Union of Teachers. The Conference was also attended by invited teachers from the Commonwealth, many of whom had migrated from their home country and were now recruited as teachers in the UK.

Participants debated several aspects of teacher experiences in the Commonwealth over four sessions. These included *Good Practices in Optimising the Potential of Commonwealth Teachers and Experiences of Commonwealth Teachers – Career Enrichment or Demise?* Concurrent workshops were also held to explore strategies to improve, enrich and enhance the experiences of Commonwealth teachers working abroad.

Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General

Ann Keeling, Director, Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards

Finalists

Title	Organization	Country	
Educational Innovations carried forward by the School Unit after acceptance in the Educational priority Zone of the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Cyprus	18th Agio-Lemesos Primary School	CYPRUS	The Agio-Lemesos Primary School is situated in a deprived and underdeveloped area, with a population which consists of Greek Cypriot refugees, Turkish Cypriots, Roma and economic immigrants with limited education exposure. The school's Education Good Practice is aimed at promoting equal opportunities and quality in education whilst respecting the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of students, fostering inclusion and fighting racism.
The Scholarship Trust Fund for Girls	Department of State for Education	THE GAMBIA	The Department of State for Education of Gambia introduced a Scholarship Trust Fund to boost school enrolment, retention and performance rates of girls from rural communities. This Education Good Practice has resulted in an increase in the Gross Enrolment Rate for Gambian girls moving from 61% to 71% between 2000 and 2005.
Training Untrained Teachers in Ghana	Ministry of Education and Sports	GHANA	Recognising that meeting the demand for trained teachers continues to be a great challenge, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Ghana utilised distance education as a cost effective and efficient way of training untrained teachers enabling a large number to be trained within a reasonable period of time. To date 58% of the untrained teachers in Ghana have benefited from this Good Practice.
Advancing Lessons from Udaan – Addressing Challenges faced by Vulnerable Children	CARE India	INDIA	UDAAN is a residential primary education initiative comprising accelerated learning for drop-out and never enrolled girls. It is being implemented in a remote region of Uttar Pradesh. The Good Practice is a social learning package which emphasises gender equity and diversity and is now being introduced in the formal school system.
Eliminating Gender Disparities in Secondary Education... and Resource Centres	Alif Laila Book Bus Society	PAKISTAN	Alif Laila is a unique prototype programme consisting of a children's library complex and project based learning centres. This Good Practice tackles gender disparity within the public education system through provision of free access to quality education in computers, electronics and art and craft for girls.
The Seychelles School Improvement Programme	Ministry of Education and Youth	SEYCHELLES	The School Improvement Programme is a whole-school approach to change which was launched in all 23 primary schools in the Seychelles in 1995. This Good Practice transformed the ethos and culture of the school by establishing conditions for qualitative improvements to teaching and learning. Today, education leaders, teachers, parents and pupils acknowledge the positive changes to education which it has brought about.
Early Childhood Development Enrichment Centre Pilot project	Centre for Early Childhood Development	SOUTH AFRICA	The ECD Enrichment Centre Pilot Project is a Good Practice developed as an intersectoral, education service delivery model that supports families and communities in 5 disadvantaged areas around Cape Town and improves the quality of care and education of the child aged 0-6 years.
Orphans, Educators, Practitioners and Guardian Aids Project	The Art Therapy Centre – Lefika laphodisa	SOUTH AFRICA	The ATC facilitates art therapy projects with orphans of HIV/AIDS, their educators and care practitioners. This Good Practice creates emotionally containing environments where the children are able to learn and can become functional members of society.
Supporting Education in Difficult Circumstances	Generation of leaders Discovered Peer Education Development Agency	SOUTH AFRICA	The GoLD Peer Education model is a three-year peer education programme in which adolescent peer educators demonstrate leadership potential. This Good Practice provides a structured framework and sustained opportunity to address HIV/AIDS at the level and needs of the adolescent.

Implementing the New National Curricular Framework in India: A Major Challenge

By Jyotsna Jha, Education Section

The Indian school education system is likely to go through a sea change in its approach if different state governments fully accept and implement the new curricular framework adopted at national level early this year. The new framework is a marked departure from the practices so far in terms of shifts from a focus on rote learning to concept building, from one truth to the possibility of multiple truths, and similar other changes. The National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), the apex resource organisation set up by the Government of India to assist and advise the Central and State Governments on academic matters related to school education, developed the new national curricular following a nation-wide consultative process. The process of developing this curriculum was interesting as it provided space to different kinds of stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, larger public,

practitioners and academia to participate and engage themselves in the discourse.

Twenty one National Focus Groups were constituted on different aspects such as aims of education, systemic reforms for curricular change, textbooks, examination reforms, gender issues in curriculum, problems of scheduled castes and tribal children, social science teaching, science teaching, etc., drawing about 8 to 12 members each from the education community of civil society organisations, research institutions, teachers, academics and activists. Advertisements were carried out in leading national and sub-national dailies making an open call for the public to provide inputs. The Focus Groups held meetings in different parts of the country to engage as many organisations and individuals as possible and came up with position papers on respective topics. These were then studied and put together in a coherent framework by the Committee responsible for the purpose and approved by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) for approval. CABE is the apex body with representation from different state governments and civil society organisations for decisions pertaining to education.

The process was, however, not without, controversies and hitches. The position papers and the framework, especially on issues such as history textbooks and teaching were severely debated and attracted criticisms by sections of both Left and Right wing academia. While some of the Right wing academicians were upset for the fact that issues as critical as examination of caste and religious divides were included at the school level, some of the Leftist academicians felt that leaving too much space for a child's own interpretation meant leaving space for interpretations that need not be allowed. The representatives of the state governments ruled by parties other than that at the centre were apprehensive of the motive for bringing this new approach that promotes critical thinking and argues for a complete overhaul of school education system. The real challenge, however, is now to make state governments act on this and for schools to really practice this. The implementation would not be possible without active support of educational administration and other support institutions. But if implemented fully to the letter and spirit, it would mean a major shift for the country.

Visits to the Secretariat

By Vicky Williams, Education Section

Professor David Plummer, Commonwealth/UNESCO Regional Chair in Education (HIV/AIDS) at the School of Education, The University of the West Indies (UWI), Trinidad & Tobago, visited the Secretariat in July 2006 and met with Education Section staff. He made a presentation on HIV in the Caribbean and touched on topics like sexual debut before the age of 15 and non-marital, non-cohabiting sexual partners. Questions addressed in the presentation included whether wide-spread protective behaviours were realistic, given that sexuality is so deep seated and does sex education work, or will it simply worsen the situation? Professor Plummer also spoke on the gender feminisation of HIV and he also presented results of a Survey data on the age of sexual debut and HIV risk in Caribbean countries.

His talk also involved the tertiary education sector and recent Caribbean ways forward such as the joint initiative between UNESCO, WB and UWI to deepen the regional educational response; the recent 'Port of Spain Declaration' on the Education Sector's Response to HIV and AIDS; the professionalisation of HIV & health and human relationships in the education sector; and a regional Masters in Education (Health Promotion) programme being introduced in the UWI.

New Staff Member – Mrs Florence Malinga



Mrs Florence Malinga joined the Education Section in October 2006 as an Advisor, working on Universal Primary Education (UPE). She comes to us from a long career at the Ministry of Education and Sport, Uganda. Her last position was as Commissioner for Education Planning where she spearheaded the development of education sector plans and implementation of programmes such as UPE and the introduction of the SWAP process in Uganda. She holds a B.A

[Hons] Degree with a Diploma in Education from Makerere University, Kampala, and an International Diploma in Education Planning and Administration from the National Institute for Education Planning and Administration, India. She also holds a Masters Degree in Education Management [M.Ed] from Makerere and has a certificate in Education Policy Analysis and Planning from Harvard University.

For information and contributions to this newsletter or queries, please write to: The Editor, Collaborative Partnerships Newsletter, Education Section, Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, UK. Tel: + 44 (0) 20 7747 6294 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7747 6287 Email: f.kelleher@commonwealth.int education@commonwealth.int Website: www.thecommonwealth.org/education

This Newsletter is compiled by the Education Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, and may not necessarily reflect the views of the Commonwealth Secretariat. If you print, copy, archive or re-post these items, please retain this credit and disclaimer. Re-posting on commercial sites requires written permission from the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Editorial: Fatimah Kelleher Design: Keith Smith



EDUCATION TITLES

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

NEW

Achieving Education for All: Pakistan: Promising Practices in Universal Primary Education **Quality UPE Good Practice Series**

Dr Fareeha Zahar

Despite the enormous challenge of attaining the Education for All and UN Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015, Pakistan has taken up the challenge, as have many other developing countries of the Commonwealth. In this handbook for education policy-makers and practitioners, Pakistani educator Fareeha Zahar has identified and compiled good and promising practices which are working towards the achievement of universal primary education in her country. Policy-makers internationally will find that the approaches adopted in Pakistan have much to tell them about how to address similar problems in their own countries.

January 2007, 80 pages, GBP £8.50, ISBN 0-85092-833-8/ 978-0-85092-833-4

NEW

Annotated Bibliography on Gender in Education *edited by Jyotsna Jha*

This annotated bibliography brings together the currently available documentation on gender and education in five countries – Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, India and Pakistan – with special emphasis on secondary education. The bibliographies include both published and unpublished titles, from the United Nations, other multilateral agencies, NGOs, and research institutions. Where possible the location or source of the particular entry is identified to help readers source the original document. The volume should be useful for a range of users: researchers, policy makers, planners, teacher educators, government and non-government education managers, as well as activists.

December 2006, about 256 pages, GBP £25.00, ISBN 0-85092-846-X / 978-0-85092-846-4

NEW

Boys' Underachievement in Education: An Exploration in Selected Commonwealth Countries *Jyotsna Jha and Fatimah Kelleher*

Gender disparity in education has usually been experienced as disadvantaging girls. Now a new phenomenon of boys' underachievement – both in terms of participation and performance – is appearing in a number of countries.

This book reviews the research on boys' underachievement and presents the arguments that have been put forward to understand its causes. The authors also present new studies from Australia, Jamaica, Lesotho and Samoa; and they use both the research and the evidence from the case studies to explore the causes and policy implications of this trend – the first time a truly cross-regional approach has been applied to the issue. This book will interest all education policy makers and analysts concerned to ensure gender equality in school education.

December 2006, about 160 pages, GBP £20.00, ISBN 0-85092-845-1 / 978-0-85092-845-7



Resource Materials for Multi-Grade Teaching: Better Schools Series

Commonwealth Secretariat / Association for the Development of Education in Africa

Multi-grade teaching is one way in which governments with limited resources can provide all children with a good quality education. These seven Modules on Multi-grade Teaching were designed as part of a wider partnership effort to assist countries to achieve quality universal primary education. Developed by Commonwealth educators and tested in Tanzania.

2005, 322 pages, GBP £17.50, ISBN 0-85092-826-5 / 978-0-85092-826-6



Achieving Education for All: Good Practice in Crisis and Post-Conflict Reconstruction **A Handbook for Education Policy Makers and Practitioners in Commonwealth Countries** **Quality UPE Good Practice Series** *Peter Williams*

This report has been compiled from a Sub-Saharan African Ministers' conference presented jointly by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). The conference was held in June 2004. Peter Williams is Professor of Education at the Institute of Education, London University.

2006, 80 pages, GBP £8.50, ISBN 0-85092-805-2 / 978-0-85092-805-1



Managing Finance and External Relations in South African Schools

Managing Schools in South Africa series *edited by Lesley Anderson and Jacky Lumby*

Looks at both financial management and of managing external relations in order to ensure the ongoing commitment of stakeholders. Contents: Resources for Education; Management Styles and their Impact on Financial and Resource Management; Financial Management and Strategic Planning; Generating School Funds; Budgeting; Using Resources for School Improvement; The Context of External Relations in South Africa; Working with the Community; Marketing Schools; Accountability; The Role and Responsibility of School Governors; Working with Parents; Working with the Education Department.

2005, 248 pages, GBP £13.50, ISBN 0-85092-782-X / 978-0-85092-782-5

how to order

Order online, or with your payment from: Publications Section, Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, United Kingdom. (Telephone +44 (0)20 7747 6534. Fax +44 (0)20 7839 9081. Email publications@commonwealth.int).

Post & packing: UK orders: 15% of order value (minimum payment £2.00). Non-UK orders: 25% of order value (minimum payment £3.50).

browse and buy at www.thecommonwealth.org/publications