

Commonwealth Education Partnerships

2013/14

**Commissioned and researched by Andrew Robertson with Rupert Jones-Parry
Country profiles researched and edited by Richard Green**

Published for the Commonwealth Secretariat by Nexus Strategic Partnerships

Commonwealth Education Partnerships

2013/14

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A CIP catalogue record of this book is available from the British Library.

A Library of Congress CIP catalog record has been applied for.

First published 2013

ISBN 978-1-908609-08-3

Nexus

Published by Nexus Strategic Partnerships and available from:

Telephone: +44 (0) 1223 353131
Fax: +44 (0) 1223 353130
Email: orders@nexuspartnerships.com
Mail: Nexus Strategic Partnerships
St John's Innovation Centre
Cowley Road
Cambridge CB4 0WS
UK

And through good booksellers

For the Commonwealth Secretariat

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Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX
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Knowledge, Food and Security

MICHAEL OKPARA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, UMUDIKE



Kentucky State University, Dr Sias visits MOUAU

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Hilary Edeoga, played host in August 2012 to the President of Kentucky State University (KSU) Dr Mary Sias and her team as part of the consolidation of the international linkage between KSU and MOUAU. He stated that the collaboration between MOUAU and KSU is a practical one that will benefit not only both Universities, but Nigeria in general noting that the content of the memorandum of understanding, which the two universities have signed, is in line with the pursuance of the transformation agenda of

President Goodluck Jonathan. Dr Mary Sias expressed her institution's readiness to partner with MOUAU in the areas of Aquaculture, Agriculture and Biofuel. Others who accompanied Dr Mary Sias were her spouse, Dr Shadrach Sias, Prof. Emma Oleka and Prof. Teferi Tsegaye all from the KSU. The team later visited the College of Natural Resources and Environmental Management (CNREM). The acting dean of CNREM, Dr Anthony Nlewadim expressed the College's appreciation to the Vice-Chancellor for making the visit from the KSU a reality.

Vision

The vision of the University is to be the foremost institution for producing highly-rated graduates in Agriculture, Science and Technology and to be a vehicle for the attainment of the primary goals of the Nigerian Agricultural Policy of selfsufficiency in food and fibre production.

Mission

To provide high quality, practical training to students to become professionally competent and confident persons capable of self-employment to develop environment-friendly and people-sensitive technologies and to enhance the well-being of the people through extension and other interventions.

Introduction

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU) was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1992. The University is located in the south-eastern part of Nigeria.



Vice-Chancellor Professor Hilary Odo Edeoga

Colleges and Schools

- > College of Agribusiness and Financial Management
- > College of Agricultural Economics, Rural Sociology and Extension
- > College of Agriculture and Science Education
- > College of Animal Science and Animal Production
- > College of Crop and Soil Sciences
- > College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
- > College of Applied Food Science and Tourism
- > College of Natural and Applied Sciences
- > College of Natural Resources and Environmental Management
- > College of Veterinary Medicine
- > Postgraduate School
- > School of General Studies

Directories and Centres

- > Directorate of Research and Development
- > Directorate of University Advancement
- > Directorate of Information and Communication Technology
- > Centre for Molecular Biosciences and Biotechnology
- > MOUAU Extension Centre
- > Centre for Continuing Education
- > Centre for Entrepreneurship Studies
- > Centre for Gender and Child Development

PMB 7267, Umuahia,
Abia State, Nigeria
Tel: +234 803 548 1333
Email: vc@mouau.edu.ng



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BELLS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY OTA, NIGERIA

Km 8, Idiroko Road, Benja Village, P.M.B. 1015, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria



above:
Prof. Isaac A. Adeyemi,
Vice-Chancellor

Vision

To be a world-renowned university that is committed to the transformation of society through environment-friendly technologies and other innovations.

Mission

To discover, disseminate and apply the knowledge of science and engineering for human well-being and the development of the society.

Our philosophy is guided by the following factors:

- The need to increase access to university education to a large population of well-qualified candidates that cannot attain places at existing universities.
- The need to create an environment conducive to teaching, learning, research and good character building.
- The increasing need for all-round education and training for students.
- The need to nurture the spirit of entrepreneurship in students.
- Emerging economies are technology-driven and science-based programmes are high priority. There is an urgent need to expose staff and students, irrespective of their disciplines, to the tools of ICT.

University Anthem

*On the Rock: the sure foundation,
Stands a citadel of erudition
Learning like Bells University of Tech
Built to impact knowledge
To strive towards academic excellence
Safeguard society from moral
decadence
Brighter future lies in Technology
Glow! You offspring of vision*

Chorus:

Female call: Share the dream
Male Response: Share the dream
Female call: Tread the path
Male Response: Tread the path
All: Be light-bearers of a
prosperous Nation;
 Brace up, celebrate the
prominence of Science,
Glow! You offspring of Vision



right: Mrs Oluwayemisi O. Gbadebo,
Registrar

Core Area of Competence: Technology
Student Population: 2,500 plus

www.bellsuniversity.edu.ng

Philosophy and Objective

'To promote the advancement of knowledge and produce graduates with well-balanced education who are eminent positive contributors to society, and are also capable of self-actualisation and employment generation.'



PHASE	COLLEGE	DEPARTMENTS	PROGRAMMES	DURATION
1	COLFOODS	Food, Science & Technology	B. Tech Food Technology	5 Years 1
		Biotechnology	B. Tech Biotechnology B.Sc. Nutrition	5 Years 3
	COLNAS	Physical Sciences	B.Sc Physics with Electronics	4 Years 4
			B.Sc Applied Mathematics with Statistics	4 Years 5
			B.Sc Mathematics with Computing	4 Years 6
			B. Sc Mathematics with Management Sciences	4 Years 7
			B Sc. Business Mathematics with Statistics	4 Years 8
		Biological Sciences	B.Sc Microbiology	4 Years 9
		Chemical Sciences	B.Sc Industrial Chemistry	4 Years 10
			B.Sc Biochemistry	4 Years 11
	COLICT	Computer Science	B. Tech Computer Science & Technology	5 Years 12
		Information Technology	B.Tech Information Technology	5 Years 13
	COLMANS	Economics, Accounting & Finance	B.Sc. Economics	4 Years 14
			B.Sc Accounting	4 Years 15
			B.Sc Finance & Banking	4 Years 16
		Business Administration	B.Sc. Business Administration Human Resources Management	4 Years 17
			B.Sc Bus Admin (Business Computing)	4 Years 18
			B.Sc Bus Admin (Marketing)	4 Years 19
			B.Sc Bus Admin (International Business)	4 Years 20
			B.Tech Management Technology Project Management	5 Years 21
		Management Technology	B.Tech Management Technology Transport Planning and Logistics	5 Years 22
2	COLENG	Mechanical Engineering	B. Tech Biomedical Engineering	5 Years 23
			B Tech Mechatronics Engineering	5 Years 24
			B.Tech Mechanical Engineering	5 Years 25
		Electrical & Electronics Engineering	B.Tech Electrical & Electronics Engineering	5 Years 26
			B.Tech Computer Engineering	5 Years 27
	COLENVS	B.Tech Telecommunications Engineering	B.Tech Telecommunications Engineering	5 Years 28
		Architecture	B.Sc Architecture	4 Years 29
		Building Technology	B.Tech Building Technology	5 Years 30
			B.Tech Quantity Surveying	5 Years 31
			B.Tech Estate Management	5 Years 32
		Urban Development	B.Tech Urban & Regional Planning	5 Years 33
			B.Tech Surveying and Geo-Informatics	5 Years 34

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UNIVERSITY OF UYO

UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE



Professor Comfort M. Ekpo,
Vice-Chancellor

Established in 1991, the Federal University of Uyo is evolving into a centre of excellence in teaching, research and community development, determined to make its mark in the development of various enterprises.

The University is located in the heart of Uyo, capital of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria - the largest oil producing state in the country. Uyo is easily accessible by road and there are two international airports within a 100 km radius: Calabar in Cross River State and Ibom Airport. The University currently operates from four campuses.

Our Vision

To be a centre of academic excellence by utilising the available human and technological resources for teaching, research, community service and sustainable development.

Our Mission

To diligently pursue scholarship and deploy its output for human capacity development and economic growth in the society, with active participation in Information and Communication Technology, sensitivity to Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and responsiveness to global environmental changes.



Population

■ Academic staff	1,406
■ Senior non-teaching staff	1,175
■ Junior staff	1,160
■ Number of professors	125
■ Student population	18,724

Academic programmes

- Regular undergraduate
- Regular postgraduate
- Part-time diplomas and degrees
- Sandwich and undergraduate long vacation
- Pre-degree for Science students in the following Faculties:
Agriculture, Basic Medical Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Education, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Pharmacy and Sciences.
- Basic Studies to prepare students for A levels and Interim Joint Matriculation Board (IJMB) examinations in Arts, Science and Social Science-based programmes

The University has a number of Centres and Institutes involved in research and development, cultural, entrepreneurial and various scientific studies.

Principal Officers

Vice-Chancellor

Prof. (Mrs) Comfort M. Ekpo
BLS, Ed. M.Ed. (ABU) Ph.D (Wales)

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)

Prof. Okon A. Ansa
B.Sc (ABU); M.Sc (ABU); Ph.D (University of California Davis)

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Prof. Paul D. Ekwere
MBBS, FRCS, FWACS

Registrar

Mrs Edak U. Umondak
BA (UNICAL), MLS (Ibadan)

Bursar

Sir Michael E. Asuquo, KSJ
HND (Polycal), MBA (UNIUYO)

University Librarian

Prof. (Mrs) Felicia E. Etim
B.Sc, MLS, Ph.D (Ibadan)

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Foreword

Commonwealth Secretary-General, Kamalesh Sharma

In 2013, we pass two particularly important milestones for education in the Commonwealth: the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) celebrates its Centenary, and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) its Silver Jubilee.

These anniversaries remind us that education has long been an area in which the Commonwealth has made a distinctive contribution, and that the work of both the ACU and COL continues to be of outstanding value. The practical impact of their respective endeavours in the field of education advances our shared values of democracy, development and respect for diversity, and reinforces the sense of the distinct Commonwealth identity and the spirit and benefit of mutual support.

Meeting in Mauritius last year, Commonwealth Education Ministers acknowledged that, 'despite the significant increase of access to education, quality and equity represented common challenges across all Commonwealth countries'. Addressing the meeting, the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr Kenny Anthony, quoted the observation of his fellow St Lucian, the Nobel Laureate economist Sir Arthur Lewis, that 'the fundamental cure of poverty is not money, but education'.

In their communiqué, ministers went on to note that, 'unless robust advocacy for the pivotal role of education post-2015 – in the economy, for society, for democracy and for development – is made, there is a risk that it might lose its place in the global priorities'.

It was therefore with a great sense of urgency and collective responsibility that a Ministerial Working Group was established, with representation from all regions of the Commonwealth, to define Commonwealth priorities for education within the global development framework that will succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education For All (EFA) targets post-2015.

Following a process of consultation, and a meeting at Marlborough House in December 2012, the Group's recommendations concerning education on behalf of the Commonwealth were advanced through UK Prime Minister David Cameron, Co-Chair of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel advising on the global development framework beyond 2015. We received clear confirmation that this Commonwealth contribution helped practically to shape the global discourse on the post-2015 world we want.

The essential link between education and development is especially apparent in the sphere of youth livelihoods, employment and school-to-work transitions, which are discussed in this publication.



It also finds reflection in our Commonwealth theme for this year, 'Opportunity through Enterprise': both are advanced through early and sustained access to education and through lifelong opportunities for employment, economic inclusion and personal fulfilment.

Greater participation by young people in the social and economic life of communities and the nurturing of civic leadership through respect and understanding are goals of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). It too reaches a landmark in 2013, the 40th Anniversary of its establishment in accordance with a mandate of Commonwealth Youth Ministers, endorsed in 1973 by the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Ottawa. In remaining relevant, the CYP is now being reformed so that it continues to serve contemporary youth development needs in the years ahead.



Instituto Superior Politécnico Sol Nascente

(Polytechnic of the Rising Sun)

Honor, labor et meritum

'The Institute wants to assert itself not only as a place of meritocracy, but also as a space for the continuous assessment of the "ethics" of meritocracy, hence its motto "Honor, labor et meritum."

Dr Inacio Valentim,
Director for Scientific Studies

'The management of ISPSN will maintain its focus on scientific research by teachers and students of Huambo and Bié to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the provinces.'

David Boio, Dean of the ISPSN

Mission

To promote the development of technical and human skills of Angolan leaders, through the provision of higher education of the highest quality based on science and individual responsibility.

Undergraduate Courses

- International Relations and Political Science
- Law
- Economy
- Nursing
- Finance and Accounting
- Human Resource Management
- History and Didactics
- IT Management
- Psychology and Didactics
- Sociology

Center for Applied Research Ethics (CISEA)

As an interdisciplinary research institution CISEA enhances the academic and scientific activities of the Institute and contributes to the training and development of Angolan researchers. The Center encourages researchers to publish in other academic areas and publishes articles of internal and external researchers submitted for arbitration. It seeks to develop partnerships with various research institutes through the collaboration of outside investigators assigned to other centres.

Social Responsibility

Our aim is to promote the Institute in the community in which it operates with the following objectives:

- Provide annual scholarships to needy students who demonstrate academic abilities and skills to successfully pursue their studies.
- Support local researchers in the region and publish works of scientific merit.
- Promote, through the work of students, the development of a programme to spread environmental awareness, the values of conservation and preservation of the environment.
- Co-operate with the authorities of the region to develop a school sports programme, enhancing the capacities of young people and contributing to their development.

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These deep roots and continuing initiatives to advance education and entrepreneurship among Commonwealth citizens, particularly the young, show the benefits that accrue as a result of collective practical action and co-operation among our member states and within the Commonwealth family.

Notable among recent developments was the founding in 2012 of a Commonwealth Students' Association (CSA), followed by the launch in 2013 of its new website and a membership recruitment drive. The CSA will represent and build the capacity of student associations and their leaders, undertake research, and provide a conduit for consultation and advocacy on matters of particular concern to students.

The title of this publication, *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2013/14*, underscores that realising the potential of collaboration remains central to the way we work in the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Secretariat is partnering in a project linked to the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow: 'Commonwealth Class' will use the interest raised by preparations for the Games as a focus for creating pan-Commonwealth links between children, teachers and schools throughout the Commonwealth. Our aim for this global online initiative is to invigorate learning and to bring into the classroom the values of the new Charter of the Commonwealth and the aspirations we have for the increasingly youthful Commonwealth. By providing material for school

assemblies and printed classroom resource packs for those working with the 7–14 age group, our intent is that within the context of sport these values will be given added vitality in schools, taken home and communicated to friends and family. This project can become a striking resource, helping motivate our youth to high achievement, and deepening their sense of belonging to the Commonwealth family.

We at the Commonwealth Secretariat value the fruitful relationship we enjoy with Nexus Strategic Partnerships, who work closely with us and the wider Commonwealth family to produce this and other publications. By bringing together a broad cross-section of education activities in one publication, *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2013/14* gives a sense of the immense range and the vitality of co-operation made possible through the links and resources of our contemporary global Commonwealth networks.

We are confident that even more can be achieved through these connections, and that Commonwealth collaboration in pursuit of our collective goals can be enhanced by means of the additional resources and capabilities for advanced interaction now available through 'Commonwealth Connects', our ambitious web platform. By working together inclusively, we are able to achieve more and to build innovatively on each other's participation and strengths.

12 September 2013

Achievers University

Achievers University, a private residential institution located in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria, commenced academic activities in 2008. With its serene and aesthetically pleasing landscape, the University is highly committed to providing a positive environment for the nurturing of competent, quality and value-driven graduates who are self-reliant, highly productive and globally in tune with every sphere of human endeavour.

Achievers University has two colleges: College of Natural and Applied Sciences, and College of Social and Management Sciences - which constitute the first phase of its 15-year development plan.

The University curricula are enriched with state-of-the-art facilities in the areas of information and communication technology, entrepreneurship and vocational training, and professional training and development.

Achievers University offers the following undergraduate programmes:

COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES (CONAS)

Biology • Microbiology • Mathematics • Statistics • Computer and Information Systems • Chemistry • Industrial Chemistry • Biochemistry • Medical Laboratory Science • Geology • Health and Information Management • Applied Geophysics • Environmental Science

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES (COSMAS)

Accounting • Accounting and Fraud Detection (Forensic Auditing) • Banking and Finance • Insurance and Actuarial Science • Business Administration • Stockbroking and Capital Market Operations • Economics • Political Science • International Relations • Geography and Planning

SCHOLARSHIPS

The University offers 50% of tuition as scholarships for students in Geology, Industrial Chemistry, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Banking and Finance.

For further information contact:

Tel: +234 80 3219 7040 • +234 80 6762 2251

Email: info@achievers.edu.ng

www.achievers.edu.ng



Vacancies

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the following positions in the University:

A. PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

i. Vice-Chancellor

Candidate for the post must be a distinguished scholar with outstanding academic and administrative records. S/he must possess a Doctorate Degree and be a full professor of, normally, not less than ten years standing with the ability to provide academic and administrative leadership for the university community. S/he must possess a proven and demonstrable ability to attract international research and development grants.

ii. Registrar

Candidate must possess a very good honours degree and must have had at least five years' experience as a seasoned administrator in a tertiary academic environment as Deputy Registrar.

B. SENIOR ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Professor/Associate Professor (Reader) and Senior Lecturer in all programmes

Candidate must possess a PhD with at least 10, 8 and 6 years post-qualification experience respectively. Candidate must also have a good record of publications commensurate with the respective positions in reputable international journals.

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Candidates are required to submit **fifteen** copies of their application and curriculum vitae, including names and addresses of three referees, to:

**The Registrar, Achievers University
P. M. B. 1030, Owo, Ondo State,
Nigeria**

Alternatively, candidates could send soft copies of their applications and curriculum vitae to registrar@achievers.edu.ng.

Applicants should request their referees to forward their reports under separate and confidential cover direct to the above address.

For further information, contact:

Tel: +234 80 32 197 040
+234 80 67 622 251

Email: info@achievers.edu.ng

Web: www.achievers.edu.ng

Overview

Education in the Commonwealth: a status report

Esther Eghobamien, Interim Director, STPD, Commonwealth Secretariat

Background

The Commonwealth recognises education as a human right and remains committed to achieving universal access to quality education for all. The Commonwealth has also reaffirmed the role education can play for social and economic transformation and, ultimately, the realisation of its collective aspirations – democracy and development. Yet, despite the impressive progress made in Commonwealth countries since the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were declared in 2000, recent data from the 2012 Commonwealth report on the performance of member countries in achieving the goals, shows that about 23.3 million primary school-aged children are still out of school in the Commonwealth.

Supporting member countries to achieve the education MDGs and EFA has been the focus of the Commonwealth Education Programme. The position of Commonwealth countries in respect to the degree of achievement of EFA and the MDGs is diverse. Countries vary greatly in terms of the size and structure of their education and training systems, demography, resources available and policy-making. This diversity implies that Commonwealth countries are likely to have different priorities with regard to education, a situation that needs to be taken into consideration in the formulation of the Commonwealth Secretariat Education Work Programme periodically.

The Commonwealth comprises two billion people, of which one billion are over the age of 25 years. There are 461 million illiterate adults in the Commonwealth, which accounts for 59 per cent of the world's illiterate adults. The Commonwealth needs to strengthen education management and governance through sustainable systemic reforms. This includes supporting contextually specific policies that aim to ameliorate the impact of poverty on its citizens.

Regardless of specific country challenges and their priorities in setting EFA and MDG national targets and goals, quality issues appear to constitute a common concern across the Commonwealth. There is abundant evidence suggesting, for instance, that the MDG 2 – to achieve universal primary education – cannot be attained unless there is significant improvement in quality education provision and learning. In this regard, the recent international debate on education has placed greater emphasis on teachers and school leaders, stressing the critical role they can play in achieving the universal goals. It is in this context that the longstanding Commonwealth focus on teachers continues to be relevant.

The post-2015 development agenda for education debate has significantly shaped both the programmatic focus for the Commonwealth Secretariat's Education Section, and the context in which its education programme is delivered. The Section has contributed to shaping the new development agenda, and continues to advance the education interests of the Commonwealth through its work programmes.

The post-2015 development agenda for education

2015 will see the deadline for achieving EFA and the MDGs. A new global framework for development is being debated. Progress in achieving the current goals is being reviewed, and lessons learned, while minds are turning to the future and envisioning the world we want. Along with many other organisations, the Commonwealth Secretariat is taking this opportunity to review its role in supporting the education of Commonwealth citizens, and to map out how it can contribute in the most effective ways.

One of the clear advantages of the Secretariat is its connections with Ministers and key policy decision-makers. This is achieved partly through its status as an intergovernmental organisation in which each member country has a stake, but also through Commonwealth Education Ministers' commitment to meeting triennially to articulate a common vision for education in the Commonwealth and to learn from one another about how to achieve this vision.

Given the similarities among Commonwealth education systems, due to shared language, history and values, the Secretariat has been the natural choice to mediate these relations. Areas of collaboration to date have included sharing the learning from middle-income countries about performance management of school systems with lower income countries. In a world in which power relationships were rapidly shifting, a body of equals has particular import.

In global political, economic and social contexts, which have changed radically since the debate that led to the current development framework was held, the role of education remains as important as ever. However, the way education is planned, funded, implemented and monitored has become more complex. More philosophically, in a world where high technology is now commonplace for many, and yet only so recently, the whole purpose of education is being questioned. What and who is it for? How can it best be delivered? How much should it be for individual, intrinsic benefit, and how much for extrinsic benefit to society and the economy? How can the big global challenges –



Professor Bamitale Omole
Vice-Chancellor

The Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) is a comprehensive public institution established in 1962 as the University of Ife.

OAU is situated on a vast expanse of land totaling 11,861 hectares in Ile-Ife, Osun State, in the south-west of Nigeria. The campus is regarded as 'Africa's most beautiful campus'.

The University has two colleges, 13 faculties, 92 departments, 4,300 staff members and a student population of about 35,000.

The University comprises the central campus, students' residential area, staff quarters and a teaching and research farm. There is also an ultra-modern sports complex with a tartan track and an Olympic-size swimming pool; a power station, a dam with a water treatment plant, a zoological garden, a natural history museum and a museum of antiquities.

The University is ranked 1st in Nigeria and 8th in Africa on the Webometric ranking of world universities of 5 August 2013.

OAU is the leading ICT institution and a World Bank designated Centre of Excellence in Software Engineering in Nigeria. With over 50 km of fibre optic cabling, covering the entire campus, there is a network coverage spanning 50 sub-networks, providing connectivity to over 4500 networking devices; with an aggregate of 490 Mbps internet bandwidth. There is a cloud computing environment consisting of a 7.7 TB cloud server for applications; TelePresence facilities for communication and distance learning; and e-testing facilities for simultaneous computer-based examinations.

The University has produced five laureates of the Nigerian National Merit Award in Science, Technology and Arts (African Languages and Literatures), while Nobel Laureate in Literature, Wole Soyinka and the late Ola Rotimi, one of Nigeria's leading playwrights and theatre directors, have taught at the University.

OAU hosts national and international research centres:

- Centre for Energy Research Development
- Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys
- National Centre for Technology Management
- African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in English

For learning and culture



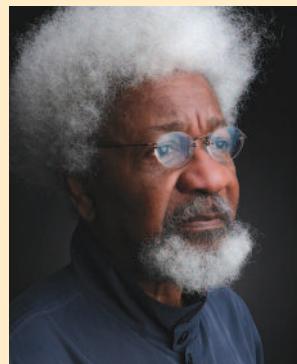
Administrative building



Olympic-size swimming pool



Sports Complex



Playwright, poet, novelist and essayist, Wole Soyinka won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986



Natural History Museum



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The unique 'Great Ife' experience – liberal education, critical and productive scholarship, cutting-edge research and a dynamic vibrant daily life in a lush, serene and beautiful semi urban campus environment.

inequity, discrimination, climate change, food security, conflict, unemployment, the digital divide – be confronted through education? Who decides?

Commonwealth Ministers of Education met in Mauritius in August 2012 to discuss these questions. They established a Ministerial Working Group to make recommendations for the post-2015 development framework for education. The recommendations stress access, equity and quality. The Chair of the Working Group, Dr the Honourable Vasant K. Bunwaree, Minister of Education and Human Resources, Republic of Mauritius, handed the Commonwealth's Ministerial recommendations to the UN High Level Panel (HLP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda in December 2012. These three priority concerns strongly resonated throughout the HLP report, released in May 2013. These three priorities also shape the Secretariat's work in education.

The HLP report marks an important step in the process of negotiating the post-2015 consensus. The recommendation for four education goals – in the areas of pre-primary, primary and secondary education and education for employability and skills – reflects some of the key areas discussed by education and development stakeholders in the global consultations held in the last 18 months, in which the Secretariat has enthusiastically engaged directly and indirectly through its membership. But the publication of the report, which represents the first concrete suggestions emanating from the UN, affords stakeholders a moment to step back and ask whether these provisions for education are necessary and sufficient.

There is no doubt that the post-2015 development framework will be crucial in marshalling resources and setting policy. We must therefore be mindful of what is left out of proposals as much as what is left in. We must consider how precise the targets are. Are they sufficiently focused to be clear, but flexible enough to allow a wide range of countries to achieve them according to their need? We must envisage the indicators that might be used to measure progress towards their achievement – for indicators in many ways define the goal. It is a truism that what gets measured gets done, and in all this we must ask ourselves, what do we exclude by adopting a particular formulation?

A Technical Meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group was convened in September 2013 to consider the response to the HLP report. The four key issues addressed were:

- 1. Integrated development framework** It is unclear whether the three current education components (MDGs, EFA and the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development) are intended to be unified into a single framework (as recommended by the Working Group)
- 2. Universality** Although the HLP report advocates that all countries should implement the new global goals, the extent to which developed countries' ministries of education are preparing for this is unclear
- 3. Skills** Effectively integrating skills for employment into the framework requires further thought and clear direction
- 4. Measurement of quality** The influence that emerging global learning assessment frameworks might have on the framework and its implementation needs to be understood and discussed

With regard to the first issue, Commonwealth Ministers stated that aligning the existing education MDGs and EFA would result in less duplication; ease the process of incorporating global goals into national policies; make monitoring, evaluation and reporting more efficient; and make comparisons among countries more meaningful (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2012b). The Secretariat and the Working Group have been advocating for this alignment in diverse global, regional and national forums.

On the second issue, implementation of the original MDGs focused on developing countries, supported by the development agencies of the developed countries. But there is no country that does not need to improve access, equity and quality. The Commonwealth, with countries ranging from the most to least developed, is well placed to bring developed and developing countries' ministries of education to the table so that they can learn from countries experienced in aligning education delivery systematically to globally mandated criteria. The Secretariat is inviting both developed and developing countries' ministries of education to the Working Group meetings to facilitate this.

Similarly, integrating skills for employment is a task faced by all countries. In June 2013, the Secretariat convened a roundtable on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills, inviting key stakeholders to share strategies for how the education and employment agendas could be more effectively connected. This took place in the context of a Secretariat review of TVET policies and initiatives in five countries (Bangladesh, The Gambia, Jamaica, Kenya and Papua New Guinea). Review findings will form the basis of technical assistance to refine policy. Ensuring that these policies align with emerging global debates is key. This exemplifies the Commonwealth's pivotal position at the nexus of national and global domains.

With regard to quality, the Commonwealth has long advocated a broad conception of quality that goes beyond easily measured numerical indices such as student-teacher ratio or class size. The Commonwealth Teacher and School Leader Professional Standards, which are developed and updated through a consultative process with a wide range of countries, maintain a strong focus on learning outcomes as the principal indicator of quality and the foundation of professional competency. But the measurement of learning outcomes is one of the areas where we must exercise most caution in what we include or exclude as indicators. Selection of a few areas of competence, such as literacy or numeracy, will result in teachers teaching to the test and a reductive curriculum of conceptual and affective poverty.

If results-based aid is made contingent on the achievement of a few goals in key educational outcomes, education systems will re-orient around results in those areas, causing institutionalisation of that curriculum and this will be difficult to undo. Conversely, numerous indicators that try to capture every conceivable aspect of learning will be unwieldy and expensive to operate, causing an additional burden to education systems. Balancing the tension between global measurements of quality that enable comparisons among countries and national systems that provide contextually relevant feedback for students, teachers, parents, school leaders and ministries must be the focus of efforts as this agenda is progressed.

The Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group has articulated an Advocacy Strategy that provides a road map on how critical



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- Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

- Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company Ltd
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stakeholders should be engaged to sustain the ministerial recommendations through the global negotiations. The 'key message' from Ministers is:

The need to ensure free, quality, basic education for a minimum of nine years continuously, minimising differences in learning outcomes, defined by national standards, between more and less advantaged groups, and to provide post-basic education and opportunities for all youth and adults to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to participate fully in society and secure decent work.

Active engagement of all stakeholders and at all levels – national, regional and global – in advocating the ministerial recommendations is essential. The above message is elaborated in the Commonwealth Ministerial Working Group's recommendations for the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education, which remains the basis for detailed advocacy.

To ensure coherence and minimise duplication of efforts, the Education Section of the Secretariat has been tasked with establishing a mechanism for co-ordinating advocacy action, monitoring progress and providing feedback to the Ministerial Working Group.

Access, equity and quality

Broadening access to quality education for the most disadvantaged has remained the focus of the Secretariat's Education Section, which sees access, equity and quality as very strongly linked. Just a few selected projects are outlined below to indicate how the Secretariat has responded to member countries' needs.

Although access to primary education was, until recently, improving greatly, the positive trend is slowing, and some Commonwealth countries are showing reverses (Menefee and Bray, 2012). This indicates the difficulty in reaching the most marginalised communities. To help address the needs of one such community the Secretariat recently published *Guidelines for Quality Education Provision to Nomadic Communities in Africa*. These guidelines aim to support education stakeholders by offering a roadmap for policy and planning based on the experience of nomadic educationalists from various Commonwealth countries.

Although much progress on gender equality has been made, there is still much to be done. *Women and the Teaching Profession: Exploring the Feminisation Debate* draws on the experiences of Dominica, Lesotho, Samoa, Sri Lanka and India, examining the role of female teachers in the expansion of education systems and the surrounding gender equality issues. In an increasing number of countries, boys' participation and achievement in education is less than girls'. The Secretariat is currently working in Jamaica, St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago to develop and support the implementation of a school improvement strategy to address boys' underachievement.

Emergencies caused by disaster or conflict can have a highly disruptive effect on education, compromising access, quality and equity. *Educators in Exile: The Role and Status of Refugee Teachers* examines the barriers forced migrant teachers face in securing employment in host countries.¹

Migration is an important issue in the Commonwealth in other contexts as well. The Secretariat has launched two tools to assist countries develop and implement policies for managing

international teacher migration. These are the *Model Memorandum of Understanding for the Recruitment of Migrant Teachers*, which provides a template for countries wishing to enter into an agreement on the cross-border recruitment of teachers, and the *Standard Reporting Form*, which assists countries to collect data on teacher migration.

At the 18th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (18CCEM), Ministers identified environmental concerns as a key issue for the Commonwealth, especially – but not exclusively – for its 32 members that are small states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2012a). *Education for Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States* provides detailed ideas on how gaps in implementing ESD can be overcome.² It is based on research in ten Commonwealth countries.

The *Guidebook to Education in the Commonwealth* provides examples of over 60 innovative initiatives that overcome a wide range of policy challenges, using examples from over 30 countries. The Commonwealth Education Good Practice Award, which was received by Rwanda for its Nine Year Basic Education programme at 18CCEM, also exemplifies how Commonwealth countries can learn from one another.

Partnership and brokerage remain core principles of the Secretariat's approach. In partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the Secretariat is in the process of supporting a number of higher education institutions to undertake a self-assessed quality assurance audit and review, according to a Review and Improvement Model developed with COL.

All countries will benefit from the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF), which was approved at 18CCEM. This will be based at University Sans in Penang, Malaysia, and its core activities will include data collection, research, and the production and dissemination of general policy papers, as well as other services that will improve the quality of tertiary education.

Teachers are of course at the heart of quality, and the Secretariat has continued its long-standing convening role for the Association for the Development of Education in Africa's Working Group on the Teaching Profession. This productive partnership has resulted in a number of important outputs, such as comprehensive teaching materials on multi-grade teaching, harmonisation and enrichment of technical support, programmes and activities in African Commonwealth countries and beyond. In addition, improved multilateral co-ordination and bilateral support has strengthened the Commonwealth Secretariat's position as a leader in the education sector. Development of programmes for school staff, leaders and management has helped to improve teaching and learning, and to address teachers' ongoing professional education needs.

Conclusion

The post-2015 debate represents both opportunities and risks. Done right, the new global framework has the potential to end poverty for the first time in human history. Failing to do right, the incomplete fulfilment of human potential and the increase in inequity will come to haunt us. Education is at the heart of the debate, and the Commonwealth at the cutting edge of turning the debate into reality.

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Endnotes

- 1 Information brief available at: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/254665/FileName/EducatorsInExileInformationBrief.pdf>
 - 2 Information brief available at: secretariat.thecommonwealth.org/.../ESDSIDSInformationBrief.pdf
- See also Matthew Hiebert's article, 'Education and sustainable development in Commonwealth small states', in Chapter 2 of this publication.

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