

Chapter 2

Country Profiles

2.1 Australia

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview⁴

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

* 2009 data

** 2011 data

*** Full-time students, not FTEs

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

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

2.2 The Bahamas

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview⁷

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

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

** Public pre-primary schools only

2.3 Bangladesh

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.4 Barbados

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.5 Cameroon

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.6 Canada

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.7 Cook Islands

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Currently, the following education sector research is being undertaken:

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

Statistical overview

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

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

** +12 Area Schools

2.8 Dominica

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.9 The Gambia

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.10 Grenada

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.11 Guyana

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.12 Jamaica

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.13 Kenya

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.14 Malawi

Country education system

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

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

Basic education (Primary)

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

Secondary schools

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

Tertiary education

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.15 Malaysia

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.16 Malta

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

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

2.17 Mauritius

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.18 Mozambique

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.19 Namibia

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

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

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

2.20 Papua New Guinea

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.21 Seychelles

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.22 Singapore

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

* Includes 15 mixed-level schools and 13 junior colleges

2.23 Solomon Islands

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.24 South Africa

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

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

Source: Department of Basic Education South Africa (2012)

2.25 Sri Lanka

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

* Comprises 19 universities and 17 higher education institutes

2.26 St Kitts and Nevis

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.27 St Lucia

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview*

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

*Data is for 2010/11

2.28 St Vincent and the Grenadines

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.29 Uganda

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The nation expects to meet this key priority through:

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.30 United Kingdom

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview

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

2.31 United Republic of Tanzania

Country education system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statistical overview⁵⁴

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