

Part II COUNTRY INITIATIVES

Chapter 3

Introduction

3.1 Commonwealth country initiatives by focus area

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

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

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

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

Table 3.1 Commonwealth country initiatives by focus area

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

3.2 Definitions of focus areas

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.3 Methodology

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