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Knowledge, evidence and learning for development

Overview of UK development education landscape with a focus on partnerships between UK schools and those overseas

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Question

Describe the Development Education Landscape in the UK: specifically, what else apart from British Council's Connecting Classrooms programme is going on to build partnerships between schools in UK and schools overseas? How many children/schools are part of something like this?

Contents

1. Overview

This rapid review provides an overview of the UK development education landscape with a focus on what else apart from the British Council's Connecting Classrooms Programme is going on to build partnerships between schools in the UK and schools overseas? How many children/schools are part of something like this? These questions are related to a second query covered in a separate helpdesk report that examines childhood development stages; specifically, when is the best time to influence children's and young people's thinking on global issues? These helpdesk reports are designed to help inform a business case and guide DFID's thinking for a new approach to delivering development education in the UK when the current phases of Connecting Classrooms and the Global Learning Programme (GLP) ends.

This review was jointly conducted by researchers from Education Development Trust in collaboration with a team from Development Education Research Centre (DERC) at the University College London (UCL). DERC has been responsible for most of the research on international partnerships in the UK and has provided access to a range of studies to work in collaboration with the researchers at Education Development Trust to produce this paper. Both organisations reviewed the available literature and jointly undertook the writing of this report. Education Development Trust also contacted several academics and practitioners involved in global learning to ask for any evidence they were able to provide.

Key findings include:

- International school partnerships have been an important feature of the educational landscape of the past twenty-five years. At present, however, apart from the British Council Connecting Classrooms programme, there is no other major UK-wide initiative to support such linkages.

- International partnerships with schools were promoted by UK government after 1997 and became very popular between 2000 and 2010. Since then reduced levels of funding and lower political impetus, have led to a decline in activity, with efforts often being dependent on individual teachers' interest and enthusiasm.

- There are some strong partnership initiatives in Scotland and Wales, and in England there are a number of relatively small NGO led programmes.

- International partnerships have been an important stepping stone to a school's greater engagement in global learning.

- There are dangers of paternalistic and neo-colonial relationships between schools in the UK and the Global South, but the chances of mutual basis partnerships developing increases when professional development is an integral part of the link activities.

- Some schools with international partnerships as an integral part of their global learning activities have developed foundations to raise income to sustain and develop the link.

- Connecting Classrooms and the International School Award have been important generators of further interest by schools in partnerships.

- Curriculum development and joint projects using social media and new technology are becoming important features of partnerships.

2. Context

International partnerships between schools in the UK and schools elsewhere in the world have been an increasingly popular feature of British education practice for more than thirty years. These partnerships have often been developed as a result of personal contacts, the influence of government policies especially between 1997 and 2010, support from non-governmental organisations and enthusiasm and interest of individual teachers. Bourn and Cara (2013: 11) noted that the drivers for this growth have been:

- 'teachers' own enthusiasm for encouraging broader worldviews amongst their pupils, to learn and experience different cultures;
- policy-makers' belief in school partnerships as a way of breaking down international barriers and healing rights between countries; as part of European, Commonwealth or UK-US programmes;
- development education as a means for meeting global citizenship and development awareness goals and understandings; and
- belief in the value of global connectedness as a mechanism for broadening the experiences and outlook of pupils.'

The UK has been the leading country promoting such partnerships although there is evidence of other examples in other European countries, notably Ireland (Toland, 2011) and Australia. There have been a number of networks supporting such linking activities, most notably the United Kingdom One World Linking Association and its off-shoot BUILD - Building Understanding through International Links for Development.[1]

International partnerships have featured in a number of research studies over the past decade but most of them have been related to responding to needs of evaluating projects and initiatives. These include: the study for DFID by NFER (Sizmur *et al.*, 2011); evaluations for the Global School Partnerships programme and Connecting Classrooms by Edge *et al.* (2009); Hirst (2013) and Hirst and Associates, (2014) and a range of studies looking at the impact of NGOs' work (notably Link Community Development and Plan UK) in this area (Bourn and Bain, 2012; Bourn and Cara, 2012; Bourn and Cara, 2013; Edge *et al.*, 2011). There have also been a number of research- based studies, either for dissertations or doctorates (Alcock, 2010; Brown, 2006; Cook, 2010; Disney, 2008; Hulton-Harrap, 2015; Leonard, 2014; McNicholl, 2012; Pickering, 2008) or with research council funding (Martin and Griffiths, 2012).

2. 1 Defining partnerships

School linking in terms of the Global North and the Global South has been discussed particularly by Leonard (2008) who notes the concept has been defined thus:

> 'a link between schools in the UK and Africa, Asia and Latin America or the Caribbean is a partnership which is long-term, fully reciprocal, and embedded in the curriculum' (Central Bureau, 1998, quoted in Leonard, 2008).

She goes on to suggest however that this reflects a rather idealised interpretation of school linking and that the practice has been much more diverse than this, incorporating a range of

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[1] See: http://www.build-online.org.uk/jml/about-us

relationships from short-term associations to long-term partnerships and from a focus on curriculum to a focus on fundraising. A more appropriate approach would be to see the engagement schools have with each other as a continuum from relationship to partnership (Leonard, 2008).

2. 2 History of school international partnerships in the UK

Initiatives that promote linkages and partnerships between schools in the UK and schools elsewhere in the world have been part of the educational landscape for over thirty years. Prior to 1997, the then Overseas Development Administration, the predecessor to DFID, funded an organisation called Education Partners Overseas whose role was to support links between the UK and the Global South. This organisation became absorbed within the British Council and influenced the establishment of the first major DFID-funded programme in this area, Global School Partnerships which ran from 2003 to 2012. From 2012 the major programme related to school linking in the UK has been Connecting Classrooms – the first phase from 2012 to 2015 and a follow up phase from 2015 to 2018. The primary focus of this programme is the professional development of teachers with support for school links as one of the four outputs for the programme.

Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development from 1997 to 2003, stated in 1999 that she wanted to see every school in the UK have a link with a school in a developing country by 2010. This drive for partnerships led to a range of initiatives in addition to the programmes run by the British Council, with DFID funding a number of projects and initiatives. Some major international NGOs developed programmes of their own, most notably Link Community Development and Plan UK. The BBC developed its World Class Initiative[2] which was an online platform promoting and supporting links and innovative programmes by a range of NGOs (see Bourn and Kybird, 2012; Bourn and Cara, 2013).

However, following changes in 2010 in DFID policy to funding development education work, there has been a marked decline in support and engagement in school linking. There is now no distinct funding in this area for NGOs and whilst there were examples in the past of funding from the European Commission, the budget line for development education has become increasingly competitive with a smaller number of projects supported.

3. Evidence from research

3.1 Key findings

As noted earlier there have been a range of studies looking at the impact and contribution of school linking to understanding development and global issues.

What all these studies show is that whilst there is evidence of the popularity of linking and its support by both teachers and pupils, there was concern about the extent to which links encouraged a more critical view of development and questioned assumptions about schools and communities in Africa and South Asia (Disney, 2005; Burr, 2008).

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[2] BBC World Class: http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldclass/

Doe (2008) in a report for UNESCO UK identified over 1,310 schools in the UK which had links with over 1,660 different schools and covering over 80 countries.

Bourn and Cara (2013) reviewed 16 different linking programmes and found the following:

- Nearly three-quarters of them started between 1996 and 2007.
- The majority of the programmes involved joining specific communities, or children-centred development, or had development education themes within the aims of their activities.
- The majority of the programme support was based on linking advice, professional development, teaching resources, partner allocation, arranging visits and online resources.
- Almost half the programmes had a worldwide scope, whereas the remainder focussed on specific areas of the world, or particular communities in those areas.
- The majority operated with around 120 schools or more.
- 80% of the organisations receive external funding to operate their programmes.

Since this research by Bourn and Cara (2013), there is little published material to ascertain evidence as to whether these trends are still current. However, of the aforementioned initiatives, the school linking programmes under BBC World Class, Link Community Development and Plan UK are no longer active.

Within these types of linking and the many other more informal partnerships that may exist between schools in the UK and elsewhere in the world, are a range of approaches from links that have grown out of personal contacts by teachers or wider community/local authority initiatives to joint curriculum projects, movements of teachers and pupils as well as the more traditional areas of exchange of letters and direct fundraising and infrastructure support from the North to the South.

Bourn's study (2014) on school linking and global learning with seven schools showed the following:

- Schools became involved in a school link after the increased political interest and support for this area, post-1997.
- Chance and personal contacts also played a role in initiating a link, with NGOs often playing a role in identifying contacts.
- The growth and maturing of the links came as a result of the opportunities to access and secure funding from DFID-funded school linking projects.
- A number of the schools already had a strong international ethos, due to leadership from senior management, historical connections, or in one school, a mission that had been heavily influenced by involvement in the International Baccalaureate.
- For the majority of the schools, the decline in funding and support from government and NGOs has resulted in their link having a lower profile and influence than it had three or four years previously.
- For a number of the schools, particularly the secondary schools, the links they have developed with schools in the Global South have become part of a broader programme of international links.

- For some of the schools, the links are now part of the everyday life of the school.
- Six of the seven schools have the International School Award (ISA) but this was seen more as recognition for what they were doing than as a stimulus for further linking and engagement with global learning.
- For all the schools, having a link had certainly enriched the quality of their teaching and learning, made the curriculum 'real' and demonstrated that the pupils and the school as a whole were part of a global community.
- All the teachers interviewed referred to the impact the experience of having a link had had on them personally, in terms of questioning their own assumptions, broadening their perspectives and, as a consequence, developing their understanding of global learning.
- Several schools referred to the importance of external support and professional development opportunities as part of their learning experience.
- Links made an important contribution to schools' engagement with global learning:
  - as an important resource for activities, bringing issues to life and making them real;
  - through enhancing the curriculum;
  - through mutual learning around joint projects;
  - where a link that has included some exchange of staff, this has led teachers to re-think their views about the wider world, to question their own assumptions and to seek ways in which they could relate this learning to wider school practices;
  - through raising awareness of the challenges that a school faces through a link, in terms of the risks of paternalism and perpetuating a colonial mentality.

These themes of the impact of the link resonate with other studies which demonstrate that where connections have been made to the broader curriculum of the school and the professional development of staff, an international partnership can enrich the quality of teaching and learning.

The study by Edge *et al.* (2009) for the DFID-funded Global School Partnerships programme showed the importance of providing support structures to teachers engaged in linking. This research identified the importance of relating any linking activity to broader teacher development and school leadership.

Sizmur *et al.* (2011) were commissioned by DFID to conduct an impact evaluation of the Global School Partnerships (GSP) programme. This was primarily a quantitative study based on an online survey with pupils and teachers. The study identified that teachers who had engaged in the GSP programme had 'used global learning to encourage pupils to reflect on their own values and attitudes' and supported 'other schools to provide global learning' (Sizmur *et al.*, 2011: 44). The study also found that the overwhelming majority of teachers involved with GSP said that being involved with a link was very useful in developing pupils' awareness of global issues (Sizmur *et al.*, 2011). The evidence from the qualitative aspects of the study, based on interviews with teachers from 21 schools, identified that having a link helped make 'learning about other countries less remote, and less abstract' (Sizmur *et al.*, 2011: 60). An observation from this study was the impact of exchange visits on both teachers and pupils in terms of transformative experience.

These themes can be found in other studies, notably Bourn and Cara (2013: 53) who showed the value of 'real world contacts' that also helped pupils to challenge their 'usual stereotypes of

Africa'. Hirst and Associates' (2014) evaluation of Connecting Classrooms found that teachers believed that international partnerships could help with learning because they bring real-life circumstances into the classroom. They also found that on the issues that partnerships typically address, all students are usually at a similar starting point and therefore those who normally under-achieve are not necessarily disadvantaged.

The various dissertations and Phds on these types of school international partnerships tend to re-enforce these themes. Leonard's (2004) doctorate is perhaps the most important and distinctive because it focuses on the southern impact of linking and emphasises the potential value of connections to the Millennium Development Goals. Her research however also poses the dangers of colonial relationships and emphasises the value of inter-cultural understanding. These themes can also be seen in the dissertations by McNichol (2012) and Hulton-Harrap (2015).

Since Autumn 2009, the DERC has run an MA module on North-South Educational Partnerships. Many of the students on the module are practicing teachers who have been involved – either formally or informally – in educational partnerships and links. A few have been deeply involved in these in practice and chose to write their final assignment about their experiences. Module discussions and assignments have highlighted a number of issues for educators, including:

- The need for continuing professional development to develop the skills to effectively engage in partnerships with colleagues overseas.
- A desire to establish equitable and mutually beneficial learning partnerships, rather than simply mechanisms for fundraising.
- The importance of both leadership and resources in maintaining partnerships that are sustainable in the long-term.

Other evidence on impact:

- Most of the evidence has been through British Council's work but other material includes the ESRC-funded project at Exeter University led by Dr Fran Martin on Mutual Partnerships for Global Learning.
- The IOE (Edge et al, 2012) compiled research undertaken on the impact of partnerships, especially through their assessments of DFID North South School Partnerships programme (2006-2009), the British Council (Connecting Classrooms Sub-Saharan Africa 2007 – 2010) and Plan UK School Linking Programme (2007-2010) to produce a valuable toolkit, with a specific focus on the influence of partnership on schools in the Global South: http://internationalschoolpartnerships.ioe.ac.uk/index.html

3.2 Sustaining partnerships

What is noticeable from investigating a range of partnerships, is the challenge of sustaining them beyond an initial input of grant income. Some partnerships have a long history and have gained support from local authorities, charities and private companies. But what is clear is that any form of private or charitable income has often been related to sponsoring or supporting the Southern partner school with equipment, resources and professional development. What this has meant is that all too often the partnership became one of dependency rather than mutual learning. Bourn and Cara (2013: 16) in reviewing this area stated:

'What this evidence above all shows is that it seems to be very difficult to have some form of ongoing self-funding programme of support to schools in both the North and the South. Also, that the focus in most programmes despite good intentions tends to have a Northern driven agenda. Finally, there is an underlying assumption that mutual learning and co-operation is not only desirable but feasible yet few programmes address that power relations can and do play an important role in what and how pupils learn in terms of who sets the framework and content of any educational programme and what are the pedagogical influences.'

3.3 Dangers of colonialism and patronisation

There is evidence as suggested above that linking experiences can reinforce notions of dependency and paternalism, increasing support for more charitable based approaches such as raising money for infrastructure development and resources (see Disney, 2005 and 2008). Disney (2004: 146) in her research on school linking, notes that all too often links come 'dangerously near to epitomising a new form of colonialism which endorses the traditional stereotype of the dependency of people in the South and the exploitative nature of western culture.' Leonard (2012) in her in-depth study of the Aston-Makundichi partnership however suggests that although there was evidence of a charitable relationship through sending equipment and raising money, securing appropriate books and computer equipment can be empowering to the partner school.

Colonial influence is not only about how the partner in the Global North views the relationship, but also how the Southern school views it. For example, Alcock (2010) notes how a teacher from Kenya commented on how she saw their link through the legacy of colonialism and the expectation that the partnership was a way to gain funding and resources:

> 'Since independence, Africans had believed that the white people are colonialists and are rich, so as the Partnership started most people had believed that the partners were pumping a lot of money to the school and that if any person from this end goes to the UK then one was being given a lot of money and they expect a lot.'

Alcock (2010: 104-105) however, also notes that the Kenyan teachers she was working with saw things differently and believed the partnership was about 'what we learnt from each other'. This reflects the importance of recognising the conflicting tensions that can exist within a link.

3.4 Connections to global learning

Studies also suggest that links have been seen as a stimulus for curriculum projects and professional development (Bourn and Hunt, 2010; Hunt, 2012). Bourn and Hunt's study on the Global Dimension in Secondary Schools (2010) found from interviews with teachers that school links were often seen as part of the broader curriculum: 'it's not just about a trip without any curriculum meaning'; through a joint project with pupils in India they learned about issues regarding water (Bourn and Hunt, 2010: 25). Hunt's (2012) study on Global Learning in Primary Schools found evidence that teachers felt international links had a positive influence on both pupils' knowledge and broader curriculum activities. In terms of comments from one teacher, Hunt notes that results improved in part because of the 'global experience' the children had had.

This evidence suggests that having an international link can play an important and positive role within a school in terms of curriculum development and motivation for learning. But what is less

clear is how this comes about; and how important the school culture and broader ethos is that enables this to happen. Hence the need to look in more depth at schools that have been involved in linking for some time, and have a commitment to global learning.

4. Types of partnerships

It should be noted that very little information is available regarding the numbers of schools or children involved in these projects, and whether schools are engaged in more than one initiative.

4.1 School-based initiatives

Many of these links may have emerged from a relationship with the British Council but have become self-funding in terms of supporting partner schools. Funding for continuous professional development and curriculum development are not possible unless a school is wealthy, e.g. an independent school such as Brighton College.

A few examples of such school-based initiatives include:

- **Egerton Primary School** in Cheshire (partnered with Egerton school in Njoro, Kenya) and since 2010, the Egerton Schools Foundation has been established and acts as a fundraiser for continuing the partnership through the provision of teacher exchanges and teacher packs to support global learning[3].

- **Buntingsdale Infant and Primary School**[4] (partnered with a rural school in Kenya) and out of it grew a community-based initiative Zest for Life[5], which support projects in the area near the school in Kenya.

- Brighton College (leading a partnership of six schools in the UK with seven schools in Ghana) organises pupil trips to Ghana each year with each group supporting a particular community to develop or further a library, travel between projects, spending time with the local community, and gaining an increased understanding of both development issues and Ghanaian culture.

4.2 Twinning initiatives

A number of schools have school partnerships through links established as part of town-twinning and well-established community links. Two examples include:

- **The Marlborough Brandt Group** which is a community-based charity that supports a partnership link between Marlborough in Wiltshire and Gunjur in The Gambia. The link is founded on mutual learning through reciprocal visits, a development programme in The Gambia and an education programme in the Marlborough area. It has been running for 35 years and supports organisations to deliver development and education programmes in Gunjur as well as working in the UK to educate and provide the opportunity for people

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[3] http://www.tesf.org.uk/
[4] http://www.buntingsdale.shropshire.sch.uk/global-learning/curriculum
[5] www.zfl.org.uk

in the Marlborough area to travel to and experience life in Gunjur.[6] However, this group had to close its offices in 2017.

- **Hay On Wye to Timbuktu[7]** is a well-established community link between Hay On Wye in Wales and Timbuktu in Mali that has had considerable local public support over the years and has included links between schools in both countries.

4.3 Non-governmental organisations

Historically a range of NGOs have led projects on international partnerships. Two key organisations were Plan UK and Link Community Development.

Plan UK's school linking programme began in 2007 and by 2011 had approximately 320 participating schools in the UK with link schools in China, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal and Sierra Leone. It aimed that through communication, young people would learn from each other, develop inter-cultural understanding and contribute to Plan's child-centred development goals. It had as its objectives to have an impact on pupils and young people, teachers, schools and the local community. These objectives proved to be almost impossible to measure in terms of impact because they were based on long-term processes of change and NGOs such as Plan worked on funding cycles for a maximum of a three-year period.

However, Plan was able to provide in-depth support to teachers who were involved in the link in the form of training, resources, professional development and on-going support and advice. The toolkit on Student Participation (Plan UK, 2011) was an example of how a school link can facilitate development and educational objectives around student participation, children's rights and taking action. During this period, Plan also ran a specific project on climate change, 'Climate ExChange – Make the Link'. It aimed to link young people in three African Countries with young people in three European countries, to learn about and debate issues around climate change and how it affects their lives. This project resulted in some peer learning about climate change (Bourn and Kybird, 2012). When UK government funding priorities for development education changed in 2010, Plan UK decided to close its school linking programme due to a combination of lack of evidence to demonstrate impact and lack of discrete funding for this area of work.

Link Community Development developed a well-respected school partnership programme in the late 1990s resulting in over 300 links between schools in the UK and Ireland and schools in Ghana, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda. Alongside this, it developed 350 alumni of the Global Teachers Programme that undertook placements in African schools between 2000 and 2008.

From 2010 to 2012, Link Community Development ran the successful Partners in Development project involving schools in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda and South Africa. A feature of this project was the production of a series of curriculum resources on themes such as poverty, health, gender and partnerships. One of the successes of the project was the opportunities it created for young people to share their experiences with their peers and to ask questions to their partner schools. An example of a question from a pupil in England to one in Ghana was "Do you ride an elephant to school?", suggesting the continued influence of stereotypes of the lives of people in Sub-Saharan Africa. Distinctive features of this project were:

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[6] www.mbg.org
[7] http://www.hay-on-wye.co.uk/twotowns/default.asp

- recognition of the importance of having a clear curriculum focus for both European and African schools;

- providing professional development support that was related to specific national educational needs;

- resourcing communications development to enable effective dialogue between schools; and

- the value of personal contact between teachers and, if possible, between pupils as well.

European schools paid a fee for the partnership which helped to facilitate and support the links but also included an element of direct funding to the partner school (Bourn and Cara, 2013: 61).

Where the project was less successful, at least for the partner schools in Africa, was in integrating resources into the relevant curriculum and approaches towards teaching and learning.

Both of the above NGOs had a vision that school partnerships could be self-funded through the Northern partner school paying a contribution to supporting links, but this did not materialise as schools increasingly had less funding and income generation moved to other priorities. At the same time, linking became seen as less important in terms of national educational priorities. Having said that, as is shown in this report there have been a number of schools who through their own internal fundraising have maintained links but on their own terms and not related to national initiatives.

There are a number of small NGOs or projects developed by individual enthusiasts that continue to be well supported by schools. Most of these are dependent on schools in the UK paying to participate. For examples see Section 5 of this report.

4.4 Web-based online and curriculum-based projects

This is clearly a growing area and there are many initiatives around the work of partnerships based on curriculum projects between schools but they rely on good internet, up-to-date technology and tend therefore to be more prevalent in urban and elite schools especially in developing contexts. A few examples include:

- Project Happy Child which aims to use the internet to construct a network of school links around the world, develop an index of educational resources and publish initiatives supporting disadvantaged children[8]

- Global School Network is a small Community Interest Company which aims to create networks of schools working together, communicating and learning from each other. It provides opportunities for children to connect with each other and funds school development initiatives[9].

- Nodebook is based around curriculum projects for young people to work together across schools around the world. To date it has only been piloted in international schools but it has potential for wider usage if appropriate resources could be identified.[10]

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[8] http://www.happychild.org.uk/schools/
[9] www.globalschoolnetworks.com
[10] http://nodebook.me

5. Examples of partnerships

5.1 Across the UK

It is difficult to review school partnerships without mentioning Connecting Classrooms because it dominates the landscape in this field and many schools that might be involved in other linking initiatives are likely at some stage to have had some involvement with this programme.

Connecting Classrooms: The current phase started in 2015 and runs through to 2018. It is a £34m programme with 50% of funding from DFID and 50% of funding from the British Council. In the logframe[11], one of the four outputs is on school partnerships and this output has three indicators:

1. Number of schools involved in professional partnerships and exchange visits relating to sharing best practice in the teaching of core skills (**target by 2018:** 4,000 schools)
2. Number of schools registered on Schools Online and accessing global learning content and resources relating to international collaboration and core skills (**target by 2018:** 35,000 schools)
3. Number of schools collaborating using Schools Online (**target by 2018:** 5,000 schools)

The Connecting Classrooms programme also offers schools an International School Award (ISA) at three levels[12] with the accreditation level (level 3) being awarded to schools who, amongst other things, can demonstrate that they have links with schools in other countries. The target number of schools awarded full accreditation by 2018 is 3,500.

The most recent Annual Review completed in May 2017 shows zero progress on indicator 1 due to a late start on this aspect of the programme.[13]

Indicator(s)	June 2016 milestones	Progress
(i) Number of schools involved in professional partnerships and exchange visits relating to sharing best practice in the teaching of core skills	400	0
(ii) Number of schools registered on Schools Online and accessing global learning content and resources relating to international collaboration and core skills	7,000	8,904
(iii) Number of schools collaborating online using Schools Online	1,000	1,502
(iv) Number of schools awarded a full ISA	1,050	751

Most of the other initiatives are small scale and are related to either a particular country or have emerged in response to individual enthusiasms. One of the most successful of these smaller scale initiatives has been:

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[11] https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-205033/documents Lograme February 2017

[12] https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/about-programmes/international-school-award/levels
[13] https://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-205033/documents Annual Review, May 2017

Link Ethiopia has been organising school linking since late the 1990s. It now works with over 100 schools in the UK and 90 in Ethiopia, encouraging pupil engagement with peers in a different culture. Teacher professional development and visits to partner schools are also organised[14].

Other small organisations providing school linking include:

- Mend The Gap http://www.mendthegap.org.uk/aboutus.html
- Build Africa - https://www.build-africa.org/how-you-can-help/fundraise/schools/school-linking-programme
- Global Ed - http://www.globaled.org.uk/about-globaled/
- Education for All - http://www.educationforall.com/Education_for_All/School_Linking.html
- Building Futures in The Gambia - http://buildingfuturesinthegambia.com/linking.html
- boNGO and Mini Me Montessori - https://minimemontessori.wordpress.com/35-2/

See also Annex 1 for examples of other programmes.

5.2 Linking Initiatives in England

Although technically outside the remit of this paper are the initiatives that promote linking between schools within England. These arose as part of the School Linking Network in the 1990s in response to the need to promote greater inter-cultural understanding. Whilst this Network no longer exists there are many examples of links between schools in urban and rural areas and between monocultural and multicultural communities. Perhaps the most successful recent initiative of this type and one that has a strong global learning theme is Kindred Spirits[15].

These links are important as they:

- demonstrate the value and importance teachers and schools give to real world experience, to broaden pupils minds and perspectives;
- demonstrate links within England can often lead to international partnerships and greater involvement as the potential next step;[16]

5.3 Linking initiatives in Northern Ireland

Centre for Global Education, Belfast[17] is a non-governmental development organisation based in Belfast which aims to raise awareness of global issues and promote action on social development. They work in partnership with the Canaan Institute, a Palestinian NGO which specialises in training, capacity-building and education at a community level in the Gaza strip and supports education for children of 7-12 years.

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[14] https://www.linkethiopia.org/get-involved/schools/start-a-school-link/

[15] http://www.globallearninglondon.org/current-projects/kindred-spirits/

[16] http://www.hollingwood.derbyshire.sch.uk/kindred-spirits/

[17] https://www.centreforglobaleducation.com/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhvmNhebm1wIVypTtCh3peQ8iEAAYASAAEgI

5.4 Linking initiatives in Scotland

Scotland-Malawi partnership[18] is a national civil society network of over 1,000 member organisations and individuals, including half Scotland's local authorities, every Scottish university and most of its colleges, over 200 primary and secondary schools, dozens of different churches and faith-based groups, hospitals, businesses, charities and NGOs, and a wide range of grass-root community-based organisations. The participating schools all have active links with a school in Malawi and learn about Malawi as part of the curriculum. Links are built on shared values of cooperation, mutual respect and collaboration.

5.5 Linking initiatives in Wales

PONT started in 2005 linking Pontypridd with the Ugandan town of Mbale, and now has partnerships in 67 primary schools and 16 secondary schools in South Wales. A further 38 school links have been set up by PONT through the Size of Wales initiative which aims to protect an area of rainforest equivalent to twice the size of Wales by planting trees in a number of countries to help offset the impact of climate change. Schools in Wales and their partners in Uganda plant fruit trees and then share information about the importance of trees and how best to look after them. Some PONT projects are supported through the Wales for Africa Programme.

Dolen Cymru Lesotho supports partnerships between Wales and Lesotho - the two countries have been linked for over 30 years through a memorandum of understanding. Most of the partnerships set up are with schools in South East and South West Wales, involving 40,000 pupils. It initially took part in Global Schools Partnerships or previous versions of Connecting Classrooms. Lesotho is not eligible to take part in the current version of Connecting Classrooms and as a result, many of these partnerships are under threat.

Some more recent school partnerships with Lesotho have been set up and sustained through the Lesotho Teacher Placement Programme funded by Welsh Government. This involves volunteer teachers from Wales teaching for several months in schools in Lesotho and three teachers in 2018 will conduct 6-month placements. Latterly some Basotho teachers have had the opportunity to also teach on placements in Wales.

Sazani Associates has been linking schools in Zanzibar with those in Wales, mainly in Pembrokeshire, West Wales, for over 10 years. The programme has supported over 100 teacher exchanges. Teaching resources have also been developed to support schools in both countries with global learning.

International School Linking based in Cardiff have supported school links with a number of other countries including Bangladesh and Brazil and more widely.

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[18] http://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/

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Annex 1: Examples of school partnerships

Linking programme name (and organisation if different)	Active since	Ethos/ Motivation for programme	Extent of programme support	Worldwide scope of programme	Number of schools	Number of staff dedicated to linking programme	Linking Fee/External Funding
Afri Twin[19]	2001	Connect learners and teachers from South Africa & UK	School clustering, partner allocation, guidance & advice, conferences & workshops	UK and South Africa	250+	One in the UK, one in South Africa	Not stated/Sponsored by Winning Ways
Achievers International[20]	2006	Encourage international trading awareness	Online support, partner allocation	Worldwide	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	£100 annual fee per partner/Initially funded by Apax Foundation

[19] Afri Twin (2010). All the remaining sources for each organisation are stated in this first column, unless otherwise stated.
[20] Achievers International (2012)

BBC World Class[21]	2011	Educational legacy for London 2012 Olympics	Partner allocation and advice	Worldwide	Undisclosed	Undisclosed.	Not stated/BBC funded
Development Direct[22]	2002	Support GCE, particularly health education	School link development	North East of England and Africa	42	Undisclosed	Not stated/Initially funded by One World Network North East (OWNNE)
Global Classroom[23]	1996	Research and develop excellence in learning	Exchange visits, student research, video conferencing	Worldwide	43	Undisclosed	Not stated/Scottish Executive & Shetland Islands Council
Global School Partnerships, DfID[24]	2003–2012	Embed GCE into the curricula of schools worldwide	Online curricular resources, linking advice, reciprocal visit grants	64 countries including UK	5000 in UK	Undisclosed.	No joining fee/Funded by DfID

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[21] BBC (2011)

[22] Development Direct (2007)

[23] Global Classroom (2012)

[24] Now merged with Connecting Classrooms, DfID (2012)

iEARN[25]	1988	Establish meaningful educational projects	Internet support, workshops, project support & linking advice	Over 130 countries	Over 30 000[26]	1 per country	Not stated/Funding from USAID
Japan Society, The[27]	Not stated	Develop successful links between UK and Japanese schools	Linking advice, teaching materials, volunteer visit scheme, teacher workshops, partner allocation, supplies grants to Japanese schools, online resources	Japan and UK	Undisclosed	1 education officer	No fee charged/European and Japanese corporate backers
Link Ethiopia[28]	1996	Inter-cultural sharing	Country-specific teaching resources, organises visits	Britain and Ethiopia	Over 120	1	Annual fee of up to £500.[29]/Funded by donations and fundraising events
My School, My Voice, Child Reach International[30]	2004	Encourage mutual understanding between children	Assembly presentations, teacher support, workshops	UK, Tanzania and Southern Asia	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Not stated, but presentations free/Funded by Eaga Trust

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[25] iEARN (2012)
[26] Including youth organisations
[27] Japan Society (2012)
[28] Link Ethiopia (2012)
[29] Stuart (2009: 12)
[30] Child Reach International (2011), Previously Global Development Links

worldwide

OWL (One World Link)[31]	1981	Encourage justice, equality, human understanding and mutual support	Teaching materials, coordinate visits, lessons and assemblies	Bo District, Sierra Leone and Warwick, UK	32 schools (both countries)	Undisclosed number of ex-teachers from Warwick.	Not stated/Funders undisclosed
Partner Ghana, Sabre Trust[32]	Not stated	A brighter future for schoolchildren in Ghana	Teaching resources, training, linking advice, facilitate exchange visits	UK and Southern Ghana	28[33]	Undisclosed.	Annual fee charged to UK school, amount undisclosed/Funders undisclosed
Plan UK[34]	2007–2011	Child-centred development	Monthly contact with teachers,[35] CPD support	UK, China and Africa	Over 320	1	Not stated/Funded by European Commission[36]
Take It Global,	1999	Engaging youth,	Heavily focused on e-resources	136 countries	3351	Undisclosed	Not stated/Funded by American and

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[31] OWL (2012)
[32] Sabre Trust (2012a)
[33] Sabre Trust (2012b)
[34] Bourn & Cara (2012: 39)
[35] Bourn & Hunt (2011: 35)
[36] ibid.: 36

TIG[37]		developing sustainable and peaceful world					Canadian donors
York Fanteakwa Community Link, YFCL[38]	2000	Learning and support between York and Fanteakwa	Telephone, e-mail and face-to-face advice on linking and fundraising, workshops	UK and Ghana	16 (York and Fanteakwa)	Undisclosed, but at least 1 treasurer	Not stated/Funded mainly by private donations

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[37] TIG (2012), previously Gemini & Rafiki
[38] YOWLA (2010)

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