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Plan

• Growth of ODL
• Trends in QA in ODL
• COL : Supporting a Culture of Quality
• What can be done
Athabasca (1978)
IGNOU (1985)
UKOU (1969)
AICU (1974)
Bangladesh Open University (1902)
BRAOU, Hyderabad, India (1982)
UNISA, South Africa (1946)
Open Univ of Sri Lanka (1984)
BCOU (1978)/OLA (1988)
Tele-Université du Québec (1972)

1988 COMMONWEALTH OPEN UNIVERSITIES
2008 COMMONWEALTH OPEN UNIVERSITIES
Asia has over 70 open universities, 13 of which are mega-universities!

India has a network of 14 open universities, 14 open schools and nearly 150 dual-mode institutions with over 7 million learners.
Barriers to ODL

- No government employment for ODL graduates
- Distinguish between ODL and F2F on transcripts

Proposed Legislation:
‘(Academic diplomas and degrees) should make mention of the modality in which the studies were completed…’
Ethiopia

- **August 2010**: Ministry of Education announces all distance education programmes in private and public institutions scrapped.
- **October 2010**: Ban lifted after robust negotiations with 64, mostly private institutions and the introduction of a QA system.
A strange paradox

Distance education is expanding

BUT

Pockets of resistance persist
One bad apple spoils the bunch

Need for rigorous QA
Trends: 1960’s 70’s: Standards

- Quality of study materials
- Interactivity through tutorials & assignments
- Usability of ODL for subject concerned.
1990’s: QA in Developed Countries

- Australia
- UK
- New Zealand
- Canada
- Adaptation to India, Hong Kong etc

One size does not fit all
2000-10: Cultures of Quality

- Convergence of external & internal QA measures
- OUUK: QAA & Internal validation unit
International

- Open University of Malaysia: ISO Certification accreditation
The front gate of the University campus in New Delhi.

Resource-poor contexts

- Kyambogo University, Uganda

Culture of quality = culture of care
A culture of quality is an institutional culture that:

- Promotes the introduction of an internal QA system
- Values capacity building for implementing QA
- Stresses the link between the internal QA system and accountability to stakeholders
- Focuses more on learning rather than on teaching alone
COL: SUPPORTING A CULTURE OF QUALITY
1. QA & Accreditation: Commonwealth

- Only 41 countries have
  - QA Authorities
  - HE Councils
  - National Accreditation Boards
  - Tertiary Councils
  - National Commissions or University Commissions
2. QA Toolkits
3. Transnational Qualifications Framework
4. Other Resources

- QA Guidelines for Distance Education
- QA microsite at www.col.org
- Towards a Culture of Quality
5. COL RIM

- A low-cost ‘do-it-yourself’ model
- Develops systemic thinking and organizational learning
- Focuses on capacity building
- Emphasis on continuous improvement
What can Be Done

- Same regulations for ODL & F2F
  - Quality Assurance Agency, UK: assesses both campus and distance universities
- Change the focus from input to outcomes
- Appropriate regulations and recognition for trans-national and private provision