



BOARD OF GOVERNORS President's Quarterly Progress Report: October – December 2010

1. Board Matters

A meeting of the Audit Committee was held by teleconference on November 8. The annual audited financial statements for 2009-2010 were approved. Draft minutes have been circulated and the audited statements have been uploaded to COL's website.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General has appointed Mr. Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor, The Open University (UK) to COL's Board, to fill the vacant place designated as "Appointment by the Commonwealth Secretary-General". A national of Australia and the USA, Mr. Bean was previously General Manager of Microsoft's Worldwide Education Products Group at Redmond, Washington, USA.

The United Kingdom has named Ms. Jo Bourne, Head of Profession in Education, Department for International Development (DFID), as its representative.

We warmly welcome these distinguished new members.

The Board Chair, The Honourable Burchell Whiteman, attended the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi and visited New Delhi on his way home. He met the Vice-Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) at the university campus in Maidan Garhi and recorded a short video, *PCF6: Impressions*, which was subsequently telecast on the national TV channel Doordarshan. He also paid a courtesy call on COL's Indian Governor, Ms. Vibha Das Puri, the Education Secretary and officials at the Ministry of Human Resource Development. During his time in New Delhi, he visited the offices of CEMCA (Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia) and attended the Christmas lunch with the staff.

2. President's Commentary

2.1 The COL community convenes in Kochi

COL's work in this quarter has been dominated by the preparations for the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning and their implementation. PCF6 was held in Kochi, Kerala, India, from November 24-28 in partnership with the Indira Gandhi

National Open University (IGNOU). Section 5 gives more detail on this very significant event.

I greatly appreciated the presence of three members of the Board of Governors at PCF6: the Chair, as noted above, Ms. Jenny Glennie (South Africa) and Ambassador Mariam Katagum (Nigeria). New Board member Martin Bean sent a video message for an orientation session on the Social Justice theme.

To an even greater extent than at previous PCFs, we took advantage of this large gathering of COL's stakeholder community, some 600 people, to hold ancillary events around our programme initiatives before the main conference. This strategy had a doubly beneficial impact: it powerfully advanced our work in those areas and it also created groups of delegates with similar interests who already knew each other before the start of PCF6 proper. This made the conference sessions particularly dynamic. Details on these meetings and outcomes are highlighted in the Programme report below (Section 3).

I express COL's warm thanks to our partner institution, IGNOU, most particularly to its Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rajasekharan Pillai, and the Programme Chairman, Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Ramanujam. Thanks to their good efforts, hundreds of delegates took away lasting memories of their time in Kochi, which is Professor Pillai's native city.

2.2 Participation in other events

I took advantage of the trip to India for PCF6 to attend other events. Among those that are not recorded in the Programme report below I note:

- An address to 2,000 schoolchildren on World Science Day in Sri Lanka at the invitation of Honorary COL Fellow Professor Uma Coomaraswamy, who is a member of the Board of Sri Lanka's National Science Foundation.
- Attendance at the formal launch of Africa's newest and smallest university, the University of Seychelles, in the presence of the Princess Royal, Princess Anne, and the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, Sir Graeme Davies (co-chair of PCF5 in London in 2008), who administered the oath of office to UniSey Vice-Chancellor Rolph Payet.
- Participation in the Steering Committee meeting of the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity, a World Bank–UNESCO partnership.
- A meeting in London with Ms. Jo Bourne, our new UK Board Member, and her Department for International Development (DFID) colleagues, Andrew Preston and David Hallam.

Earlier in the quarter, after traversing the whole of COL's vast host country, Canada, to speak to a conference on eLearning in St. John's, Newfoundland, I made a stopover in Ottawa where I addressed the monthly lunch of the Commonwealth High Commissioners, graciously hosted by the High Commissioner from Zambia at his home.

I also met senior CIDA officials and spoke to a group of staff convened by Ms. Mia Mouelhi, the CIDA Advisor to the Canadian Board Member.

A few days later, I was flattered to receive a letter from Canada's new Governor-General, His Excellency The Rt. Honourable David Johnston, who had read press reports of my Newfoundland speech, asked for a copy, and sought my advice on 'how best to pursue the Learning and Innovation theme in Canada, particularly how to emphasise some of the lessons you have been giving on education technology and digital culture'. I shall follow-up on this with him in 2011.

2.3 DFID review of support to multilateral organisations

In my last Quarterly Report I noted that DFID had initiated a review of its support to some thirty multilateral organisations. It has now completed its review of COL and I was pleased to learn that we were the only agency to submit our report – and responses to subsequent requests for additional information – as a single web link (see: www.col.org/DFIDReview). Board members might be interested to view one set of supplementary data that we provided, which breaks down COL's spending by country.

DFID's letter of November 30 ending this review of COL, which is also posted at this URL, stated that "emerging findings indicate that COL is performing well".

2.4 COL's use of appropriate technologies

One of the cross-cutting themes of COL's Three-Year Plan for 2009-2012 is 'the use of appropriate technologies'. I end this commentary with some observations on our use of technology both in our work programme and in presenting COL to the world.

2.4.1 Technology in the programme

In the programme we are making intelligent and effective use of a variety of technologies, old and new. An example of the old is our promotion of community radio by both COL and CEMCA. Community radio is experiencing exceptionally promising growth in India. Many of the news stories about it mention the role of CEMCA in assisting the Government of India in managing this growth and facilitating programming, such as *Science for Women*, that has great potential to inform community radio work in other regions. I believe that COL's and CEMCA's niche in educational content and learning programmes, with a special focus on health, is indeed most appropriate.

A good example of the application of newer technologies is our work with mobile phones in rural India that I refer to in 3.2.2 and 8.2.4 below. Excitement about the role of mobile technologies in development is now widespread. COL's contribution to the effective use of mobile phones through the LIVES project is twofold. First, it enables the technology to be scaled up – always a primary aim for COL. Second, it makes possible an analysis of the learning effectiveness of the system, which is vital for its future development.

2.4.2 Corporate use of the website

When we responded to DFID's multilateral review I was gratified, as were my colleagues who update COL's website daily, to find that all the information we needed was already there. All we had to do was to link it together.

The website (www.col.org) is one of COL's great assets. New visitors often express amazement at the rich resources they find. Keeping the traffic to the site flowing is an important task, not for the sake of institutional self-aggrandisement, but because people working in ODL find many valuable documents there.

In order to keep the search engines busy the speeches section is updated regularly, and was recently augmented by some excellent addresses given at PCF6 (www.col.org/speeches). In this quarter I have invested time in making the COL blog more active, which is now paying off in a regular flow of comments (www.col.org/blog). Recently, for example, the blog sparked a useful public discussion about the extent to which an intergovernmental body can or should insist that all documents on its website carry completely open licenses for re-use.

I encourage Board Members to consult the site regularly.

3. Programme

Colleagues took advantage of PCF6 to organise various programme-related events prior to the conference. Two of these, on Open Schooling and Learning for Farming, were held in Delhi and Bodinaikanur, Tamil Nadu, respectively. Other pre-conference workshops/meetings were held in Kochi on: Child Friendly Schools (in partnership with UNICEF); OERs (in collaboration with UNESCO); the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth; Healthy Communities; and Skills Development. I give more details about these below.

COL had commissioned Dr. Patrick Spaven to conduct a mid-term stakeholder survey during PCF6 and he interviewed over 60 people, either individually or in focus groups. The full report, which I will share with you in due course, will be available in January. It will provide recommendations for our current work, flag future directions and give us insights into the value of the PCF conferences and the needs of stakeholders across the Commonwealth.

Also in Kochi, Board Members Burchell Whiteman and Jenny Glennie were both present at a Monitoring & Evaluation workshop with key partners and staff as core participants. This helped us develop outcome statements and performance indicators for the next Three-Year Plan: 2012-2015, work that will be shared with Board members at the half-day retreat planned for early June 2011.

3.1 Education Sector

During this quarter the emphasis has been on quality assurance and training. I commented in my third Quarterly Report for 2009-2010 on the effort that COL invests in making its many training events effective by getting the right people involved, achieving the intended learning outcomes, and doing everything possible to get participants to put their new skills to use immediately.

3.1.1 Open Schooling

Thirty women (servicing 800 learners) of the Institute of Adult Education, Tanzania, were trained in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) using content endorsed by SchoolNet South Africa.

Twenty-five senior managers of open schools from 15 countries enhanced their skills in research in Open Schooling and developed a research agenda. A research policy framework was developed and it is anticipated that open schools will use the resource to develop their institutional research.

At an OER4OS (Open Educational Resources for Open Schools) workshop, 15 teachers from six countries significantly enhanced their capacity for using the open source Learning Management System, MOODLE, and open source courseware.

The development of the OER4OS project saw content in 14 subjects uploaded to the COL Wiki. It is available at [http://colwiki.org/OS Learning Portal](http://colwiki.org/OS_Learning_Portal). In an effort to assist participants and countries facing challenges of bandwidth and connectivity, the OER4OS initiative introduced the use of POODLE (Portable MOODLE) at the workshop.

I chaired a meeting of the Steering Committee of the OER4OS initiative, which was attended by a representative of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation that has provided funding for the project.

A consultancy to devise strategies for Ghana's Centre for National Distance Learning & Open Schooling (CENDLOS) was completed and the report, entitled *A Sustainable Open Schooling System for Ghana*, has been submitted.

3.1.2 Teacher Education

The UNICEF-COL Child Friendly Schools (CFS) project held several capacity-building workshops. Training was received by 249 teacher educators in Swaziland and by 60 master trainers and 25 Education Resource Centre managers and head teachers in Nigeria. The Child-Friendly Schools Standards and Indicators were completed and circulated to all ten participating countries.

Two workshops, on the UNICEF-COL CFS project and on Teacher Development respectively, were held prior to the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning

(PCF6) in Kochi, India. We are very thankful to Jenny Glennie for helping us to facilitate the CFS workshop.

Under the joint COL project with Memorial University of Newfoundland, a session was held in The Gambia for master trainers who will now train head teachers and principals of schools in West Africa. This was followed by a workshop on Instructional Design for the staff of the University of The Gambia.

On October 5, I took part with our Education Specialist for Teacher Education, Dr. Abdurrahman Umar, in the ceremony to mark World Teachers' Day at UNESCO in Paris. Speaking immediately after the Director-General, Ms. Irina Bokova, and the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Teacher Education, Ms. Christine Hakim, I launched an advocacy document that COL had commissioned for the occasion: *Teacher Education: the role of open and distance learning*. Dr. Umar held useful meetings with his UNESCO counterparts and other teacher educators present.

3.1.3 Higher Education

Lessons learned from previous trial audits are being applied in the implementation of the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for institutional quality assurance. A COL RIM preparatory visit was completed in November to the University of Calabar, Nigeria, and a verification visit to the Open University of Sri Lanka was undertaken in December.

The review and update of the Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) courses have made progress: three courses have been rewritten and are currently being edited. Two case studies for the Case Study Bank have been completed.

3.1.4 Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

A series of meetings was held prior to PCF6 in Kochi, India. Six members of the VUSSC management committee met for the second time in order to provide leadership in moving the VUSSC agenda forward and to prepare for the government interlocutors meetings. These 26 government policy makers discussed progress and plans and advised on the next steps for VUSSC. They were unanimous that the VUSSC has enabled their countries to leapfrog into the digital era. During the meeting I launched the new VUSSC website and Learning Management System.

Three members of the VUSSC management committee presented papers at PCF6 showing how the VUSSC is building capacity in the small states, repurposing OER and developing accreditation systems using the VUSSC Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF).

Four members of the VUSSC Management Committee travelled home from PCF6 via Paris to attend the December 1 OER Policy Forum at UNESCO on which I report in

3.2.4 below. The Committee Chair, Dr. Emma Kruse Vaai (Samoa), presented an account of the use of OER by the VUSSC at that Forum.

3.2 Livelihoods & Health Sector

The main activities in this programme sector were capacity development and advocacy.

3.2.1 Skills Development

Thirty-two institutional managers and policy makers from 11 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and six ministries or national agencies participated in an online course on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in TVET. Nine senior managers from key institutions in Africa engaged in flexible skills development attended a workshop during PCF6 and strengthened their capacity to introduce ODL methodologies in their institutions.

The Flexible Skills Development Community Learning Network online platform has been launched to support collaboration between TVET institutions. Six people from five Pacific countries attended a workshop in Vanuatu and developed skills in course planning and evaluation for vocational literacy. A workshop in Kerala to develop an ODL model for Community Development Officer training attracted 30 participants, and 20 people from TVET institutions and ministry departments in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia attended a workshop on flexible skills development in Lesotho.

3.2.2 Learning for Farmers

The Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme had a very active quarter. An audio course in Uganda's Ruchika language on potato cultivation was completed by Makerere University for audio-based learning. Audio-based courses on cassava cultivation and poultry management in the Swahili language were also completed, as was an ODL course on business planning for poultry in the Creole language in Mauritius.

In Sri Lanka, 250 bank officers successfully completed an ODL course on Microfinance and Agriculture developed jointly by the Central Bank and the Open University. I was present at an award ceremony in Colombo on November 11 where many of the participants in the programme braved the worst floods in 20 years to collect their certificates.

The Rural Agricultural Development Authority of the Government of Jamaica has entered into an agreement with COL for strengthening the L3F approach in the agricultural extension system of Jamaica.

Two closed beta tests of the Learning through Interactive Voice Educational System (LIVES) covering 300 women were completed. The beta tests showed that the rural

women did not have any major problems in operating LIVES. COL has developed this technology, which links large numbers of mobile phones to a Learning Management System, in collaboration with the University of British Columbia.

I was also present at a moving event in Bodinaikanur, Tamil Nadu, India, which brought together 6,000, mostly female, farmers and agricultural labourers. Their representatives made a presentation to officers from various Indian banks urging them to integrate the L3F approach into their rural credit programmes. A memorandum to this effect with 25,000 signatures was submitted to the Reserve Bank of India (www.col.org/L3F).

3.2.3 *Healthy Communities*

Fifty media, health and development workers from Bangladesh, Cameroon, Jamaica and South Africa received training in the use of media for non-formal learning and development communication. One new community learning programme on maternal and child health was developed in Lebialem District, Cameroon. It is the result of collaboration between media, public health and community development groups, and blends radio content with learner support and community mobilisation.

More than 100 community media practitioners and media advocates attended a roundtable panel organised by COL during the 10th World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters conference held in Argentina in November; some 50 educators, development communication and ICT4D (ICT for Development) specialists attended a COL-UNESCO seminar on Learning from Community Media as part of PCF6; while some 80 media practitioners, information and communication specialists and government policymakers attended a UNESCO-Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (India) and CEMCA consultation on community radio. All three events looked at the role of community media in ODL, highlighting COL's community learning model.

3.2.4 *eLearning*

As part of the joint COL-UNESCO initiative: *Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity* (www.col.org/OERPpolicy), the third OER advocacy workshop took place on October 4 in Bamako, Mali. Thirty-six participants from francophone universities and quality assurance agencies participated. The fourth OER advocacy workshop took place on November 23 in Kochi, India, to coincide with PCF6. There were thirty-two participants from various higher education institutions, mostly from South/South-East Asia and the Pacific.

This initiative concluded with an open online discussion and then a policy forum on December 1 at UNESCO in Paris. The forum brought together decision makers from governments, institutions and funding agencies to review the results of this initiative and determine how best to capitalise on the use of OER for quality higher education provision. My own address to the Forum, in which I made proposals about this, is at: www.col.org/resources/speeches/2010presentation/Pages/2010-12-01.aspx.

As part of the ICT in Education initiative, COL helped the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago to develop a policy and roll-out plans for the use of ICT in Education. COL also introduced the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI) in The Bahamas and conducted a workshop from December 2-7 for Core Trainers. They will train other trainers in The Bahamas to offer selected modules in 2011.

An ICT in Education Monitoring and Evaluation workshop for The Bahamas, Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago took place in Kochi on November 24.

3.2.5 eLearning in International Organisations

The revised online course, *Writing Effectively for the WHO (World Health Organisation)* was completed and can be accessed at www.colelearning.net/who. The WHO *Report Writing* module was expanded to include a section on proposal writing. All WHO tutors were re-trained on the new set of study materials. The general feedback was that the new version was smooth in navigation, clear in instructional language, visually attractive and enriched by new content.

During this quarter, eLIO completed six eLearning cohorts and entered into agreements with World Bank and UNHCR for further cohorts. The World Bank eLIO course *Writing Emails, Letters, and Memos* achieved a record completion rate of 94%.

3.3 CEMCA

Four community radio awareness programmes were jointly organised with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, during this quarter. Two hundred and fifty institutions that had already applied for their licenses were chosen for these three-day orientation meetings. The 100th community radio station in India was commissioned in December 2010 – a major landmark in the history of the Community Radio movement. Project reports for six community radio stations offering the *Science for Women* programmes have been completed.

The *EduFrame* project undertaken by the Maldives government with support from CEMCA and the University of New England, Australia, was completed in November 2010.

Wawasan Open University, Malaysia, launched an Internet radio system (I-radio) with support from CEMCA in October.

In collaboration with the University of Malaya, CEMCA organised training for 40 staff members from 14 universities in Malaysia in *EasyNow*, a free platform for content development in multiple media formats.

The annual meeting of the CEMCA Advisory Council was held in New Delhi on November 30 and chaired by The Honourable Burchell Whiteman.

3.4 Vice President's Activities

Vice President Asha Kanwar gave a keynote entitled *Overcoming Inequality in an Unequal World: Developing Sustainable Partnerships in Open and Distance Learning* at the 24th Asian Association of Open Universities conference held in Hanoi during November 26-28.

She also spoke at the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE 2010), *Building the Future of Education*, in Doha, Qatar, from December 6-9. Her presentation, prepared with Dr. Balaji, on *Three Generations of Open Education: Future Implications* is at: www.col.org/resources/speeches/2010presentation/Pages/2010-12-08.aspx.

The Vice President has launched a series of video recordings entitled *Distance Educators of the World*, for which ten recordings with eminent academics were completed during PCF6. Jenny Glennie and I recorded a conversation on *OER for ODL* in this series.

4. Stakeholder Relations

4.1 Member Governments Support

Contributions have been received from 30 countries so far this year. During this quarter, we received contributions from Ghana, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, St. Kitts and Nevis, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Swaziland and the United Kingdom.

4.2 Focal Points Update

We welcomed the following new Focal Points and thank the outgoing ones for their excellent contributions:

Kiribati – Ms. Karabi Bate, Acting Director of Education (Interim Focal Point).

Nigeria – Mrs. L.I.C. Amaku, Federal Ministry of Education.

Fourteen Focal Points were present at PCF6 namely: Mr. Godson Gatsha of Botswana, Professor George Papadopoulos of Cyprus, Mr. Musa Touray of The Gambia, Ms. Karabi Bate of Kiribati, Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef of Maldives, Dr. Ricaud Auckbur of Mauritius, Mr. Beans U. Ngatjezeko of Namibia, Dr. Erasme Rwanamiza of Rwanda, Mr. Peterson S. Dlamini of Swaziland, Ms. Karen Rosemin and Ms. Lystra Sampson-Ovid of Trinidad & Tobago, Ms. Katalina Taloka of Tuvalu, Mrs. Elizabeth K.M. Gabona of Uganda, and Ms. Peecheeta Spencer of Antigua & Barbuda, who was inducted as an Honorary Fellow of COL.

4.3 Honorary COL Advisors

Ms. Caroline Seelig, Advisor from New Zealand, attended PCF6 and delivered a keynote on Skills Development.

5. Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6)

The title of PCF6, *Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives*, expressed our wish to go beyond presenting open and distance learning (ODL) as a strategy for access and emphasise both the personal outcomes of learning for individuals and the wider impact on global development. This intention was carried forward in the four themes under which the conference was organised, each under the leadership of one of COL's Education Specialists: Social Justice (Dr. Kodhandaraman Balasubramanian); Skills Development (Ms. Alison Mead Richardson); Formal Education (Dr. Abdurrahman Umar); and Community Development (Mr. Ian Pringle). I pay tribute to their excellent work and also to the tireless efforts of Mr. Dave Wilson who coordinated all arrangements on the COL side.

We were extremely well served by our keynote speakers (see www.col.org/speeches for some of their addresses). Professor M.S. Swaminathan, the Honorary Chair of the Conference, gave us a flying start with his reflections on learning and development and Dr. Shashi Tharoor, who delivered the Asa Briggs Lecture, was outstanding on the topic *Educate Girls*. The theme keynotes, delivered by Dr. Chetna Sinha (Social Justice); Dr. Caroline Seelig (Skills Development); The Honourable Steve Maharey and Professor Frank Banks (Formal Education); and Honorary COL Fellow Professor Anuwar Ali (Community Development) were all excellent. My concluding keynote, which included conclusions and recommendations from the four thematic areas, is also available there.

Some of my colleagues and I also took the opportunity to record our impressions and conclusions during and following PCF6 on our COL blog (www.col.org/blog).

At PCF6, we inducted five new Honorary Fellows of COL: Professor Aminul Islam (Bangladesh); Dr. Roger Mills (UK); The Honourable Naledi Pandor (South Africa); Ms. Peecheeta Spencer (Antigua & Barbuda); and Professor John Tarrant (Association of Commonwealth Universities). COL also made its Excellence in Distance Education Awards to the winners listed on the COL website (www.col.org/edea/2010).

In addition to COL and IGNOU, other PCF6 sponsors included the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), UNESCO, the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS, India), the Commonwealth Secretariat, The Open University (UK) and the University of London. Sponsorship funds were directed entirely to travel subsidies for over 100 delegates from Commonwealth developing countries – none of whom had received funding from COL in the past to attend a PCF – ensuring that there was representation from as many member states as possible.

COL held a book launch at PCF6 to showcase 10 recent publications.

Members of the Board will recently have received an e-news bulletin (sent to 9,000 addressees) which includes links to PCF6 documentation, press clippings, PCF6's daily

newsletters/photos (www.col.org/pcf) and participant survey as well as a call for expressions of interest in hosting PCF7 (www.col.org/pcf6).

6. Finances

6.1 Revenues

COL received a total of \$7.0 million from member governments as voluntary contributions to our budget since the beginning of the financial year on July 1, 2010. This represents close to 90% of the annual funding forecast from member governments for this fiscal year (as compared to 63% at the same time last year).

Contributions in the following sums were received from these member governments in the second quarter:

Ghana – an additional \$60,000 with arrears for two years received in the first quarter; Kiribati – \$20,256; Lesotho – \$71,260; Malta – \$15,270; New Zealand – \$604,865; Pakistan – \$35,000; St. Kitts & Nevis – \$40,668; Sierra Leone – \$15,192; Solomon Islands – \$5,064; South Africa – \$250,000; Swaziland – \$30,540; and the United Kingdom – \$1,712,810.

This funding response by the end of the second quarter, with contributions in hand from all major donors except one and from 25 non-major-donor countries is most encouraging, even though the strong Canadian dollar has reduced contributions from three of the major donors – India, New Zealand and the United Kingdom – from forecast.

In addition to member government funding, over \$2 million is expected from other sources in the grants and special projects and fee-for-service categories with half of this amount recognised at the mid-year mark.

Grants and special projects: Work continues under three major grants with revenues received or expected as follows: from UNICEF for Mainstreaming Child Friendly School Models (USD1.5 million with an expected completion of June 2011); and from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for Open Education Resources (USD60,000 with an expected completion of June 2011) and a second agreement for support for VUSSC (in the amount of USD300,000 over 16 months).

COL received sponsorship funds for PCF6 in the first quarter from these sponsors – AusAID - AUD50,000; UNESCO - USD25,000; University of London - £10,000 and The Open University (UK) - £10,000 – which helped us to provide travel subsidies to PCF6 for delegates who had not attended a PCF in the past.

CEMCA entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India, valued at \$80,000 to support community radio awareness.

Fee-for-service contracts: Over \$600,000 in revenue has been forecast for the year from eLearning services with half of this amount recognised by December 31. Two

new agreements with World Bank and UNHCR totalling USD330,000 were entered into during the second quarter for course delivery during the year.

6.2 Cash Flow

COL began the new fiscal year on July 1, 2010 with cash and cash equivalents of \$8.8 million. This position has increased by December 31, 2010 to close to \$12 million due to the high percentage of funding received during the first and second quarters with receipts exceeding expenditures in both quarters.

In addition, COL holds a cash reserve of \$1.7 million to protect against any shortfalls in expected revenues.

6.3 Expenditures

Approximately 50% of the \$11.5 million budget approved for 2010-2011 is estimated to have been spent or committed by the end of the second quarter to meet programme and organisational management activities, and staff and office costs. The budget for 2010-2011 includes \$2 million of expenditures related to additional contributions.

7. Human Resources

7.1 Staff Changes

7.1.1 Movements

Dr. Willie Clarke-Okah, who joined COL in September 2006 as Education specialist – Higher Education, retired from COL on December 31, 2010.

7.1.2 Recruitment

Recruitment for the position of Education Specialist – Higher Education was completed. *Professor Madhulika Kaushik*, who is currently with IGNOU, will take up her appointment to this post in February 2011.

Mr. R. Thyagarjan will join CEMCA in February 2011 as Head – Administration & Finance when the current Head retires at the end of January 2011.

8. Technology & Knowledge Management

8.1 IT and network security upgrades

Given the very large increase in hacking activity globally, every organisation must adopt pro-active measures to secure its networks and services from cyber attacks. COL's current IT security set-up was configured five years ago and a number of new external

developments require it to be upgraded. This is especially important for COL, which offers a variety of online information services for partners and the public, and requires secure access for staff travelling on missions. During this quarter, we completed a significant upgrade to our internal and external routing and access technologies, bringing them even closer to contemporary good practices in network security management.

8.2 Other developments

8.2.1 Shared hosting of services

According to current trends in IT the use of shared hosting services is the way forward. We have begun a conversation with the BC Campus, a public sector agency in the Province of British Columbia, which offers and maintains a number of hosted services in learning management for BC-based universities. COL was invited to their biannual workshop of users and developers and identified the Adobe Connect virtual classroom as an important option for COL and its partners. We found their hosting of an online content management system also a significant opportunity. We are in active engagement with BC Campus on availing ourselves of these services. Being shared services they remove the maintenance overhead from COL and its staff.

8.2.2 Virtualisation of desktop computers

Earlier this year, COL carried out the virtualisation of the servers in its network and we have now started to virtualise the desktop computers. This step will enable staff to access their documents and software applications from any PC connected to the COL network. It also enables the core computational processes to shift to the server, thus making the desktop performance a less salient concern for staff. Furthermore, it contributes to our ongoing efforts at data and document preservation. They will now be required to reside in the common server which can be better protected. This step will contribute to increased flexibility and productivity in office work and data preservation in various ways.

8.2.3 Mixing and matching OERs

Within the eLearning/OER initiative, the KM group is working on a proposal with a set of developers in learning technology, led by Allyn Radford in Australia. The aim is to help build a set of tools that will help users in developing countries to repurpose, to mix and match available OERs to suit local needs.

8.2.4 Mobile telephony for rural development

Within the Learning for Farmers (L4F) initiative, we are engaged in bringing the LIVES, a mobile/voice telephony-based platform that can reach out to rural learners, to the attention of a network of experts engaged in deploying mobile telephony for rural development in India and East Africa. During PCF6, COL's Knowledge Management group and the Education Specialist responsible for L4F, Dr. Balasubramanian, facilitated

meetings among these experts. Scaling up LIVES to a large user base in India is a clear possibility.

8.2.5 Presenting the news

The Information Resource Centre has been engaged in a series of experiments for presenting COL information – and news gathered by COL – to a wider variety of audiences. A very recent effort to use the Google-Chrome (open source) presentation service can be browsed at <http://portal.sliderocket.com/AJQVK/daily-news>; this service is compatible with Android smartphones.

9. Publications/Resources

Connections/EdTech News, October 2010, Vol. 15, No. 3
(www.col.org/connections).

Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools (www.col.org/QAToolkit_OS).

The Publications section of COL's website has now been rebuilt to allow for customised organisation, easier searching and retrieval and for public comments on publications (www.col.org/publications).

All currencies are in Canadian dollars unless otherwise indicated.

*Sir John Daniel
President & Chief Executive Officer
December 31, 2010*