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St. Kitts & Nevis | St. Lucia | St. Vincent & the Grenadines | Trinidad & Tobago*

# **REPORT OF THE COL STAKEHOLDERS’ CONSULTATION MEETING (CARIBBEAN)**

**PORT OF SPAIN  
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

*MARCH 25, 2014*



REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS (CARIBBEAN) AND COL STAFF

March 24, 2014



## Report of the COL Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting - Caribbean

25 March 2014

### Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

The Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting for the Caribbean was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago on 25 March, 2014. The meeting was attended by 17 representatives of various organisations in the Caribbean region and two Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Consultants/Impact Evaluators (Participants list attached in Annex A). It was facilitated by Professor Asha Kanwar, President and Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Vis Naidoo, Vice President; Mr. Ian Pringle, Education Specialist for Health Communities and Team Leader – Livelihoods and Health; Dr. Mark Bullen, Education Specialist – eLearning and Ms. Rosanne Wong, Gender Equality Manager.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Understand how key stakeholder organisations address the significant need of learning and the use of technology/distance learning;
2. Identify COL's role in addressing these significant needs in the region.

The meeting took place according to the agreed Agenda (Annex B).

### TUESDAY MARCH 25

#### INAUGURATION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION MEETING

Vis Naidoo welcomed all the participants, outlined the objectives of the meeting and reviewed the agenda.



Professor Asha Kanwar formally opened the meeting and provided an overview of COL that included a brief history of the organisation, its mandate, how it is structured, and an explanation of its initiatives and themes. She explained how COL's work is informed by the notion of Learning for Development and what this means in practical terms. She emphasised that COL's purpose is to harness the potential of open and distance learning and the use of ICT to assist member states in achieving their development goals.

Ian Pringle asked all participants to get into pairs and introduce their partners to the group.

## SESSION 1

### WHAT IS COL'S APPROACH TO LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY/DISTANCE LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT?

Professor Asha Kanwar delivered a presentation on COL's notion of Learning for Development and what this means in practical terms. This notion follows Amartya Sen's definition of development as freedom and learning as "to be and to do". She explained that learning builds capability for autonomy, livelihoods and social relations. She explained that ODL and ICT can help to: 1) accelerate progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) & Education for All (EFA) Goals; 2) enhance access and equity by reducing costs; 3) improve quality of learning; and 4) reach the unreached. She emphasised that COL's purpose is to harness the potential of open and distance learning and the use of ICT to assist member states in achieving their development goals.

Dr. Mark Bullen gave a presentation on how eLearning is being used at COL and showcased some technology innovations. COL's use of eLearning is driven by a number of key principles.

It is based on the overarching notion of using ODL for cost-effective access and then using eLearning to support ODL. However, technologies are selected based on the context and needs so that available infrastructure, and learner and instructor access and readiness are taken into account.

eLearning is defined as a continuum of opportunities to use technologies to enhance and transform teaching and learning.

The technology innovations showcased were:

- Aptus, classroom without walls
- The use of community media in the Healthy Communities and L3F initiatives
- The Directory of Open Educational Resources (DOER)
- The Caribbean Open Textbooks Prototype
- The Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI)
- Developing & Teaching Online Courses (DTCO): An online course to train educators how to develop and teach online courses.
- Basic IT Skills (BITS): A blended online/face-to-face workshop to help educator gain basic IT skills needed to work in an online environment.



## SESSION 2

### THE ROLE OF LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY/DISTANCE LEARNING IN THE FIELD OF STUDY/OPERATION

Ian Pringle and Indi Mclymont-Lafayette, Regional Director of Panos Caribbean, jointly facilitated this session.

Ian Pringle explained that COL covers a broad spectrum of learning from formal to non-formal, but the focus is on learning for development. The participants represented a variety of organisations in the region and they identified with the following groupings:

- 6 government institutions
- 1 community-based organisation (CBO)
- 1 nongovernmental organisation (NGO)
- 5 educational institutions
- 5 intergovernmental organisations
- 8 institutions who deliver formal education
- 4 institutions who deliver non-formal education
- 1 institution who partially delivers non-formal education
- 1 local organisation
- 1 national organisation
- 13 institutions whose main purpose is education
- 5 institutions whose main purpose is academic
- 6 institutions whose main purpose is communication
- 13 or more institutions whose main purpose is development
- Majority are regional organisations.



Participants were divided into small groups to discuss the meaning of learning for development. Here is a summary of the small group discussions:

- Learning for development in the region focuses on autonomy, social and economic development
- Need for realignment, quality and relevance
- ICT would enable and help achieve quality and relevance
- Encompasses ideology, attitude and behaviour change
- Change comes from the local level
- Confidence and capacity is built
- Realise one's own agency to move beyond current state and capacity
- Should talk about learning for sustainable development
- Look at learning at all levels
- Goals and priorities change as learning increases
- Need a cyclical approach so that learning leads to capability that leads to action
- Learning should facilitate a total transformation of the individual
- Tools used for learning should be diverse because everybody learns at different speeds and in different ways
- Need to consider intergenerational learning
- Emphasis on quality
- Pay attention to social context of learning
- Many people are outside the formal systems of learning and their needs must be addressed
- Focus on equity/inclusion and reaching the underserved
- Every person has an opportunity to reach their full potential
- Skills and the economy
- Reinforces regionalism
- Develop good citizens, namely education for citizenship and identity.

The session also included a plenary discussion on three areas: learning; technology/distance learning; and gender. Participants were asked to reflect on these key issues and needs relative to their organisations and what is happening in the field.

Highlights from the plenary discussion included the following:

- Cannot rely only on formal sector to deliver education for citizenship
- Use social media tools to engage in consciousness raising, create online and offline communities
- Need to equalise opportunities for what is required to gain a livelihood
- Quality of learning experience differs which disadvantages some people and has the potential to create conflict
- Greatest challenge is to reach marginalised groups. Shouldn't wait until they become marginalised and alienated from the formal school system
- Need to focus on getting increasingly male and disabled enrolment at UWI open campus
- Need to strengthen the equity argument to attract the underserved
- Need to reach the "boys on the block"
- Insert into national agenda involving church, school, NGOs, community groups, government
- Need to look at different approaches to learning

- Need a regional perspective
- Need to be more inclusive, extend ourselves beyond traditional perspective even though ODL is used
- Need to be inclusive and participatory
- How to make it “content-relevant”?
- Decrease in male participation may relate to content relevance
- Fairly easy to plagiarise in distance education/online learning; need to focus on personal integrity early on in the educational process
- Demand-driven, not supply-driven; look at it from the learners’ perspective
- Need to find ways to improve the status of lower level occupations so that people feel good about their work
- What constitutes the learning process?
- Need to reshape teacher training to deal with “learning in the 21st century”
- Need to educate policy makers to the needed changes
- Often policies contradict some of the equity and inclusion goals
- TVET system needs to be developed as it is not well-developed in most of the Caribbean
- Seems to be a disconnect between what learners want and what the system is offering; e.g. use of mobile technology in the classroom
- How do we get everybody to be a part of what we are doing in terms of national/regional consensus?
- Desire for certification is part of the culture, whether in formal or non-formal learning
- Learning is transformation “deemed necessary”
- Disconnect between formal education, employers and labour market requirements
- Curriculum is key to transformation
- Need more than cognitive skills: ethical behaviour, leadership and entrepreneurial skills also required
- Institutional structure is an impediment; ICT is often narrowly defined as IT in terms of hardware procurement, technical standards, etc.
- How to move to a model that puts ICT for learning at the centre?
- Learning in itself should be seen as useful rather than seen through credentials.

### SESSION 3

#### WHAT IS YOUR ORGANISATION’S PLAN IN ADDRESSING THE LEARNING, TECHNOLOGY/DISTANCE LEARNING AND GENDER OR OTHER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS?

Dr. Mark Bullen facilitated this session. Participants were divided into small groups to discuss ways in which their organisations were addressing the learning, technology/distance learning and gender or other development needs. Participants were also asked to highlight good practices.



Here is a summary of the small group discussions:

*How organisations are addressing these issues:*

- Use of technology
- Relevant content
- Considering access and equity
- Sharing examples within the group setting
- Using the regional ICT structure in 15 countries that could help bring groups together and enable learners (CKLN)
- Open Campus of UWI is operating in 17 countries and has 4 campuses
- Investing in infrastructure at the secondary school level, but there are issues of underuse, insufficient training of teachers and security of the hardware
- Using of mobiles in the formal sector
- Tailoring courses to specific needs, e.g. 80% of students in animation are males and how to encourage women learners
- Curricula reform is necessary
- Addressing gender imbalance, e.g. mainly female learners in education and how to enable more male learners
- Strengthening government policy to support education and training of all people
- Partnership between CARIMAC, Transformative Communication Partners, NGOs, CBOs and government seen as important to enable appropriate training
- Partnership between groups to promote sustainability
- Leadership to work with learners to identify and articulate needs
- Volunteerism, sharing information and advocacy identified as important requirements
- Integrating TVET within general education
- E-agriculture programme and entrepreneurship identified as important.

*Good practices:*

#### Good practices in Trinidad and Tobago

- Institute for Gender & Development Studies is using participatory methods to involve learners in specific communities
- Life skills programme; materials for education and training are being integrated across all sectors, i.e. formal, non-formal, TVET, etc.

#### Good practices in Jamaica

- Constabulary Force was involved in delivering a community learning programme on radio; the first one was on domestic violence and the second on parenting; storytelling and experience-based approach to learning; high degree of social sustainability.

### Good practices from UNESCO

- Endorsement of the community radio movement which is an underused tool for development

### Good practices from Panos Caribbean

- Initiated a pilot for disaster early warning systems for the disabled
- A lesson learned was the need to communicate with the groups involved and involve the blind and deaf in making decisions about how to adapt, tailor materials, systems, etc.
- This pilot has helped relevant agencies to listen and helped the disaster response office to mainstream some of these issues.

### Good practices from RADA & Lifelong learning for farmers

- Leveraging the use of ICT by arranging the delivery of short voice and text-based messages to farmers
- Has developed a database of mobile phones that can be used for learning
- Addressing the issue of agricultural theft.

## **SESSION 4**

### **WHAT ROLE COULD THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING PLAY IN ADDRESSING THE KEY ISSUES/NEEDS?**

Rosanne Wong facilitated this plenary session to explore the role that COL could play in addressing the key issues and needs.

Here are the highlights from the plenary discussion:

- COL to assist in helping institutions to extend the student base using a variety of technology and learning models
- Assist in supporting the flexibility of formal institutions to work in non-formal learning/education and to support the efforts of groups in the non-formal/communication/development sectors to be involved in the formal sector
- A project with CARICOM, CANTA and CXC, as countries are at different stages of development and there is a shortage of e-format curriculum developers and instructional designers
- COL to help in critical thinking and problem-solving skills across all fields in the formal and non-formal sectors, including the areas of materials and capacity building
- Support curriculum reform so that it is more in line with labour markets and industry
- COL to support programmes about crime and violence which would have a regional potential and includes the involvement of the police; dialogue between the community and the police; and awareness-building

- Identify activities using ODL to get people to speak about sexuality, violence, incest which are considered to be “extraordinary” gender issues
- Support education and training that involves developing the skills of marginalised groups
- COL can provide inputs to policy analysis and development
- Ensure good practices and lessons learned are show-cased to support learning and development
- COL needs to be more proactive about getting information out about what it does and how organisations can work with COL; needs to share where it has been successful/unsuccessful in the region so that decision makers can be convinced
- Increase the focus on teacher training, particularly ICT capacity for teachers and the integration of ICT into practice
- COL to stay on its trajectory in terms of participatory approaches and a programme- based approach
- Make a substantive contribution to policies that address community media, people’s participation, etc.
- Identify ways to contribute to qualifications frameworks being refined and use this to enable greater learning
- Support and contribute to OER development and communication for development
- COL to contribute to developing models for effective programming on community media and capacity building on management for community multimedia centres
- Consider involvement in other areas of concern: drug abuse; climate change; and HIV and AIDS
- Ensure a contribution to agriculture and to enable the farmers to tap into capital they need to see farming as a business and further to mainstream gender into agricultural and rural development.

## **SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS OF THE DAY AND CLOSING COMMENTS**

Vis Naidoo summarised the highlights of the day’s discussions. Participants were asked to provide impressions, comments and reflections about the day. Overall, the feedback was positive.

Here are the highlights of the participant feedback:

- Logical flow to the programme
- More time needed for deeper engagements
- Useful to ask participants to provide three key inputs on their organisation before the beginning of the workshop
- An opportunity to frame things in such a way that it’s not all about COL, but also what can regional stakeholders do
- Have someone from the Caribbean to “set the stage” and give a complete overview of needs and developments in the region
- Presentation on COL should move from global to regional
- Liked the open-ended structure of the programme and discussions.

Vis Naidoo thanked the participants for their input, their engagement and their support. Professor Asha Kanwar delivered the closing remarks.

**ANNEX A**

**COL STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION MEETING (CARIBBEAN)**

*Port-of-Spain, March 25, 2014*

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name of Participant and Contact Details</b>
1. Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA)	Mr. Henderson EASTMOND Deputy Chairman, CANTA c/o Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council #7 "Chelwood" 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Belleville St Michael BB11114 Barbados  Email: <a href="mailto:heastmond@tvetcouncil.com.bb">heastmond@tvetcouncil.com.bb</a>
2. Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM)	Ms. Myrna BERNARD Director, Human and Social Development Caribbean Community Secretariat PO Box 10827 Georgetown Guyana  Email: <a href="mailto:mbernard@caricom.org">mbernard@caricom.org</a>
3. Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)	Dr. Martin BAPTISTE Education Specialist Caribbean Development Bank PO Box 408 Wildey St. Michael Barbados  Email: <a href="mailto:baptism@caribank.org">baptism@caribank.org</a>
4. Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute	Ms. Tullia IBLE Principal Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute P.O. Box 1150 Port of Spain Trinidad & Tobago  Email: <a href="mailto:TIBLE@cftdi.edu.tt">TIBLE@cftdi.edu.tt</a>

Organisation	Name of Participant and Contact Details
5. Caribbean Institute of Media & Communication (CARIMAC)	Professor Hopeton DUNN Director Caribbean Institute of Media & Communication The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus Mona, Kingston 7 Jamaica  Email: <a href="mailto:hopetondunn@gmail.com">hopetondunn@gmail.com</a>
6. Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN)	Mr. David EDWARDS Programme Manger Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network The Mutual/Trans-Nemwil Office Complex, The Villa PO Box 1431 St. Georges Grenada  Email: <a href="mailto:david.edwards@ckln.org">david.edwards@ckln.org</a>
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9. Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat	Mr. Marcellus ALBERTIN Head, Education Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Secretariat PO Box 179 Morne Fortune Castries Saint Lucia  Email: <a href="mailto:malbertin@oecs.org">malbertin@oecs.org</a>

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11. Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA)	<p>Mr. Brad CLARKE            ICT Manager            Rural Agricultural Development Authority            Hope Gardens            Kingston 6            Jamaica</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:clarkeb@rada.gov.jm">clarkeb@rada.gov.jm</a></p>
12. Transformative Communication Partners	<p>Ms. Rosamond BROWN            Managing Partner            Transformative Communication Partners            7 Lindsay Terrace            Kingston 10            Jamaica</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:rosamondbrown@live.com">rosamondbrown@live.com</a></p>
13. UNESCO	<p>Dr. Robert PARUA            Education Programme Specialist            UNESCO Office in Kingston            United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)            The Towers, 25 Dominica Drive, 3rd Floor            Kingston 5            Jamaica</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:r.parua@unesco.org">r.parua@unesco.org</a></p>
14. University of the West Indies, The (UWI) Institute of Gender and Development Studies	<p>Dr. Sue-Ann BARRATT            The University of the West Indies            St. Augustine Campus            Trinidad &amp; Tobago</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:Sue-Ann.Barratt@sta.uwi.edu">Sue-Ann.Barratt@sta.uwi.edu</a></p>

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## ANNEX B

### COL STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION MEETING (CARIBBEAN)

*Port-of-Spain, March 25, 2014*

#### AGENDA

**Date:** Tuesday, March 25

**Time:** 9:00-17:00 hours

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
9:00-9:30	Registration, Tea/Coffee		
9:30-10:30	Inauguration of Stakeholders Meeting:  Welcome and objectives of the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to the Commonwealth of Learning (COL)</li><li>• Round of introduction by participants (including name of organisation and participant's expectation)</li></ul>	Plenary discussion	Vis Naidoo Asha Kanwar All
10:30-11:30	What is COL's approach to learning and technology/distance learning for development?	Plenary presentation & discussion. Includes demos of online courses, radio programmes, APTUS, DOER, print resources.	Asha Kanwar Mark Bullen (demos)
11:30-13:00	The role of learning and technology/distance learning in the field of study/operation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction and discussion on:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Learning</li><li>– Technology/distance learning</li><li>– Gender</li></ul></li></ul>	Plenary discussion – participants to reflect on these key issues and needs relative to their organisation and what is happening in the field.	Ian Pringle  <i>Rapporteur – Mark Bullen</i>

<b>Time</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Facilitator/Presenter</b>
13:00-14:00	LUNCH ( <i>Regency V</i> )		
14:00-15:00	What is your organisation's plan in addressing the learning, technology/distance learning and gender or other development needs?	Breakout groups for 40 min & 20 min to report back. ( <i>Board Room</i> )	Mark Bullen <i>Rapporteur – Ian Pringle</i>
15:00-15:30	Tea/Coffee		
15:30-16:30	What role could the Commonwealth of Learning play in addressing the key issues/needs?	Plenary discussion	Rosanne Wong <i>Rapporteur – Vis Naidoo</i>
16:30-17:00	Summary, reflections of the day and closing comments	Plenary	Asha Kanwar Participants
18:30	Meet at the Hotel lobby for transportation to restaurant		
19:00	COL hosted dinner at Texas de Brazil		