



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COL in the Commonwealth

**2012–2015
Bangladesh**

Acknowledgements

All COL Education Specialists and their Programme Assistants as well as CEMCA colleagues have contributed to the development of the country reports which make up the volume *COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports*. This country report is an excerpt from the volume. The following people are thanked in particular for their role in the design and publication of these reports.

Alena Kovar, Receptionist/Secretary

Alex Hennig, Consultant

Alicia Swinamer, Stakeholder Relations Manager

Denise Tremblay, Design/Production Coordinator

Georgina Montgomery, Consultant

Compilation and Coordination

Alexis Carr, Project Assistant

Direction and Editing

Professor Asha S. Kanwar, President and Chief Executive Officer

Foreword

COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports summarises COL's activities over the last three years (2012-2015) and captures what we have achieved in each Member State and across the Commonwealth.

This volume is the result of a collaborative process that began in 2011 with extensive partner consultations. Following these consultations, a *Country Action Plan* was developed to guide COL's work in each country. The reports contained in this volume describe the implementation of these plans and highlight COL's achievements during this three year plan.

The reports cover all Member States of the Commonwealth, showing not only what COL has done in developing countries but also how its work aligns with the international development priorities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The reports are grouped under four regions: Africa and the Mediterranean, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Each regional section contains a brief regional report as well as the reports for each country within that region. The Pan-Commonwealth section describes COL's Initiatives, under the two sectors: 'Education' and 'Livelihoods and Health'. The reports for this triennium categorise COL activities according to our five core strategies: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy, in order to better present how our work contributes to outcomes. 'COL in Action' highlights real life examples to illustrate how COL's work impacts on people, groups and institutions in developing countries.

Most of the initiatives that COL pursued during this triennium are showing demonstrable results in expanding and improving opportunities for education and training, building healthier communities, helping rural communities achieve greater prosperity, and contributing to skills development. As the external Impact Evaluation report states: 'COL has had a major impact on individuals including farmers...faculty members, institutional leaders in formal and non-formal learning, selected policy makers and educational administrators'(S. Murgatroyd with J. Tully, 2015). The external Outcome Evaluation concludes that 'all the Initiatives moved successfully forward, on time and within budget' (N. Kemp and G. Farrell, 2015). Both evaluations confirm that COL is highly respected and well regarded in the field.

The production of *COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports* was made possible through collective effort and collaboration. Partners on the ground have diligently provided updates to COL. COL staff have tracked and assessed results obtained from partners through a thorough monitoring and evaluation process. COL's advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to capture information from numerous sources and synthesise this into the reports that make up this volume. I must particularly commend Alexis Carr for her diligent work in filtering the masses of raw data and converting them into a coherent and meaningful narrative.



Professor Asha S. Kanwar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning



BANGLADESH



CONTEXT

Bangladesh has a largely rural population of about 157 million. COL has worked with Bangladesh on numerous projects aimed at advancing open and distance learning (ODL) in the country. Bangladesh is a regular contributor to COL's budget and participates in regional activities, many led by COL's regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA).



AGREED PRIORITIES

- ▶ Develop teachers' capacity to create subject-based content and use multimedia classrooms
- ▶ Bring general education under the Open and Distance Education (ODE) umbrella
- ▶ Develop content under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model
- ▶ Develop awareness campaign of ICT in education
- ▶ Centralise multimedia content development and online broadcasting



OUTCOMES ACHIEVED BY COL

- ▶ Print and animation video learning materials developed in five skills training subjects in partnership with Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), with courses offered through DAM's nearly 900 Community Learning Centres, and made available to 200+ NGOs in Bangladesh
- ▶ Community Radio Continuous Improvement Toolkit (CR-CIT) made available
- ▶ Seven Community Learning Programmes (CLPs) operationalised and 75+ hours of content designed, with a total listenership of about 25,000 people
- ▶ Support provided for open schooling through Bangladesh Open School, including the development of a Girls' Innovation project



COL'S WORK RELATED TO MDG TARGETS

National MDG Targets Addressed by COL

- ▶ Promote gender equality and empower women
- ▶ Eliminate gender disparity to all levels of education no later than 2015
- ▶ Reduce child mortality and improve maternal health
- ▶ Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- ▶ Make available the benefits of new technologies, especially for information and communications

COL's Work on Bangladesh's MDG Targets

- ▶ Open schooling programmes are focusing on girls' leadership and improved access to education for girls
- ▶ CLPs on child and maternal health and disease prevention are encouraging positive behaviours
- ▶ Capacity-building, materials development and policy support for sharing of open educational resources and promoting ODL to address development needs are underway



QUICK NOTES

COL Focal Point:

- ▶ Mr Md. Nazrul Islam Khan, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology

Notable Mention:

- ▶ Professor Dr Abdul Mannan, Vice-Chancellor, European University of Bangladesh, is a COL Honorary Advisor

Areas of COL's Work in Bangladesh:

- ▶ Open Schooling
- ▶ Higher Education
- ▶ Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)
- ▶ Lifelong Learning for Farmers
- ▶ Healthy Communities
- ▶ eLearning



HIGHLIGHTS

COL has identified five core strategies to achieve outcomes and impact: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy. In practice, most COL activities incorporate more than one of these strategies and, in some cases, all five. However, for ease of reference, activities have been classified in only one of the five categories.

PARTNERSHIPS

COL partners with government agencies, public institutions, civil society and other organisations to improve and extend teaching and learning services to people in the developing Commonwealth.

- ▶ Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
- ▶ Bangladesh Open University (BOU)
- ▶ Dhaka Ahsania Mission
- ▶ Bureau for Non-Formal Education
- ▶ Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)
- ▶ Centre for International Education and Development (CINED)
- ▶ Bangladesh Open School
- ▶ Rupantar
- ▶ University of Dhaka
- ▶ Sialdah University of Science and Technology
- ▶ UNESCO Dhaka
- ▶ Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication
- ▶ University of Bangladesh

CAPACITY

Capacity development pervades all COL activities and COL focuses primarily on human resource development.

- ▶ Support to Attend Conference on ICT Culture in Education
- ▶ Community Radio Trainers Workshop
- ▶ Support to Attend “Radio for Equitable Education to All” Seminar
- ▶ Gender Mainstreaming in Open Schools
- ▶ Women’s Leadership Development
- ▶ eFacilitation and Instructional Design
- ▶ Locally Generated Materials Development

- ▶ Scholarships to the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand
- ▶ Community Learning Programme Workshop for Women Broadcasters
- ▶ Quality Assurance for Open Schools
- ▶ Planning and Theory of Change for Open Schools
- ▶ Girls Leadership
- ▶ ICT Leadership

MATERIALS

Materials refer to learning and teaching resources including course materials, toolkits and frameworks. Materials are produced through collaboration with partners, or by partners themselves with COL support.

- ▶ Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programmes
- ▶ Print and Video Learning Materials for Skills Training
- ▶ Community Radio Continuous Improvement Toolkit (CR-CIT)
- ▶ Community Learning Programme (CLP) Developer’s Certificate

MODELS

A model is a coherent set of structures and processes that has been shown to work in more than one context to achieve specific results. Models can range from broad approaches to more specific instruments.

- ▶ Girls’ Innovation Project
- ▶ COL Review and Improvement Model (COL-RIM)
- ▶ Lifelong Learning for Farmers model
- ▶ Healthy Communities model

POLICIES

A policy is a high-level statement of ambition that specifies the outcomes to be achieved and that guides decision-making through a defined course of action. COL supports the development of policy for organisations and institutions as well as for governments.

- ▶ Regional Consultation on Quality Guidelines for OER



BANGLADESH



LOOKING FORWARD: 2015–2021

In the lead-up to the 2014 Regional Focal Points Meeting, COL's Focal Point for Bangladesh was asked to identify the country's top priorities and what COL can do to further support the national agenda of Bangladesh. The following areas were identified:

- ▶ Provision of support for the National ICT Project, particularly in challenging areas such as:
 - ▶ rewarding “smart teachers” who are making the most use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in transforming their teaching sessions
 - ▶ establishing a monitoring system for effective implementation of the ICT Project
 - ▶ supporting government ownership of such developmental initiatives through budgetary and policy support

Appendix: COL's Activities in Bangladesh

PARTNERSHIPS

COMOSA (Commonwealth Open Schools Association)

Twenty-two partners signed the COMOSA constitution including BOU.

TVET Partnerships in Bangladesh

In February 2013, COL visited various stakeholders to discuss their use of learning materials for the training of people working in the informal sector. Visits included **Dhaka Ahsania Mission Mirpur District Training Centre, Dhaka Ahsania Mission Community Learning Centres**, and the **Bureau for Non-Formal Education**. COL also visited **Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)** to discuss the delivery of the new skills training materials through the NGO network. COL met with the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** Chief Technical Advisor for the TVET Reform Programme to discuss possible collaboration on capacity-building for materials development for the formal TVET system.

COL has an ongoing partnership with the **Dhaka Ahsania Mission** to develop non-formal skills training materials.

PARTNERSHIPS: MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

7th Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF7)

COL sponsored nine people from Bangladesh to attend the forum: **Khondoker Mokaddem Hossain** of Bangladesh Open University (BOU), **Mostafa Azad Kamal** of BOU, **A.K.M Iftekhar Khalid** of BOU, **Shahnewaz Khan** of the Centre for International Education and Development (CINED), **Dr M.A. Mannan** of BOU, **Md. Mizanoor Rahman** of BOU, **Saifuddin Sabuj** of Rupantar, **Md. Sharifah Shahabuddin** of BOU and **Sadia Afroze Sultana**, also of BOU.

Regional Focal Points Meeting

Mr Md. Nazrul Islam Khan represented Bangladesh at the meeting.

Regional Symposium on Open Education

Dr Sadia Afroze Sultana, Dean of BOU, attended the meeting.

Healthy Communities Partners Meeting

COL convened a meeting of its Healthy Communities initiative partners in Abuja in December 2013, on the sidelines of the 7th Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning. The meeting focused on conducting a mid-term review of the initiative and planning for the balance of the three-year plan. **Mr Saifuddin Sabuj** of Rupantar, Bangladesh, participated in the meeting.

AMARC and UNESCO Community Radio Workshops/Seminars

AMARC South Asia and the UNESCO Chair on Community Media held two back-to-back events in Delhi, India. A seminar held from 17 to 18 January 2013 on "Voices for Change and Peace: Seminar for Taking Stock of Community Radio in South Asia," was followed by a four-day training workshop for women community radio broadcasters of South Asia, titled "Enhancing Access To Community Media, Promoting Positive Social Change and Peace Building Through Community Broadcasting." Attending the two events were invited experts and participants from South Asia (India, Nepal, **Bangladesh**, Sri Lanka, Bhutan) and Supriya Sahu, Joint Secretary (Broadcasting), Government of India. COL, with the assistance of CEMCA, supported some of the sessions and sponsored participants to attend, including **5 women broadcasters from Bangladesh**.

CAPACITY

Support to Attend the International Conference on ICT Culture in Education

COL, through its regional centre CEMCA, supported the Educational Technology and Management Academy (ETMA) Council to host the International Conference on ICT Culture in Education held in Delhi, India, from 27 to 29 September 2012. **Mr Md. Mizanoor Rahman** and **Ms Sabina Yeasmin** of Bangladesh Open University participated in the conference.

Community Radio Trainers Workshop

A capacity-building workshop, led by Mr Charles Simbi, was held in Khulna in October 2012 for **14 community radio trainers from Bangladesh**.

Support to Attend "Radio for Equitable Education to All" Seminar

COL supported four experts from Bangladesh, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to attend a seminar titled "Radio for Equitable Education to All," hosted by the Distance Education Programme – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (DEP-SSA) of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in Delhi from 27 to 29 December 2012. **Professor Mahfuz Ashraf** participated in the seminar.

Gender Mainstreaming for Open Schools

To ensure that Open Schools mainstream Gender in their activities, COL organised a COMOSA workshop from March 13 to 17, 2013 in Delhi to discuss the Gender Equality Guidelines developed by a COL Consultant. Attending the workshop were 19 representatives from **Bangladesh**, Belize, Botswana, Canada, India, Kenya, Mozambique, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and United Kingdom.

Women's Leadership Development Workshop

COL, in collaboration with the Open University of Sri Lanka, organised a regional workshop from 18–20 March 2013 on leadership development for 24 senior women academics in South Asia. Facilitators of the workshop were Professor Uma Coomaraswamy and Professor Madhulika Kaushik. **Dr Mahbuba Nasreen**, Professor Sociology, In-Charge Disaster Management Unit, and **Dr Khair J. Sogra**, Professor and Chairperson, MBA programme of the University of Dhaka, and **Dr Yasmeen Haque**, Head of Physics of Sialdah University of Science and Technology, participated in the workshop.

eFacilitation and Instructional Design

In its efforts to build the capacity of its national and regional partners to offer distance training and mentoring, COL has supported training in efacilitation and instructional design through distance courses, of 5 and 10 weeks, respectively. Following training, efacilitators and course designers are engaged in course design and delivery. **Mr Francis Sumon Gomes** and **Mr Saifuddin Sabuj** from Rupantar were trained in efacilitation (both) and Moodle design skills (Gomes) between April and July 2013, resulting in a new 7-week draft e-workshop titled "Radio Programme Content Development, Programme Production and Broadcasting."

Locally Generated Materials Development Workshop

Dhaka Ahsania Mission, in collaboration with COL and **UNESCO Dhaka**, facilitated two five-day capacity-building workshops in April 2014 for Community Education Centre Personnel on the development of locally generated materials. The objective of the workshop was to equip the participants with knowledge and skills for developing local-level materials to reduce dependency on central-level material developers and increase supply of local-level need-based skills training materials. In total, 40 facilitators, entrepreneurs and project-based employees were trained from the districts of Sylhet and Rangpur in Bangladesh.

Scholarships to the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

To support women in higher education, COL sponsored 20 women faculty from higher education institutions in Africa and Asia by providing scholarships to undertake a one-year online certificate course in Designing and Facilitating eLearning (Level 5) of the OPNZ. This qualification is made up of three 20-credit courses and is delivered online through the Online Campus. Participating from **Bangladesh** in the programme was **Ms Tasrun Jahan**, BOU.

As of June 2014, another nine women in higher education from eight different countries, **including Bangladesh**, were

sponsored to complete the Open OPNZ programme in designing and facilitating online learning/eLearning.

Community Learning Programmes Workshop for Women Broadcasters

In August 2014, CEMCA supported the SAARC-AMARC consultation on Community Radio and organised a workshop on Community Learning Programmes for 20 women broadcasters from 10 community radio stations of Bangladesh.

Quality Assurance for Open Schools Workshop

COL organised a Quality Assurance workshop in New Delhi from 8 to 12 September 2014. **Mr Ananya Laboni** and **Dr Sadia Afroze Sultana** both of BOU participated in the workshop.

Planning and Theory of Change for Open Schools

Bangladesh Open University, in collaboration with COL, hosted a COMOSA planning meeting as well as Theory of Change workshops in Dhaka from 30 September to 3 October 2014. **Dr Sadia Afroze Sultana**, Dean of the BOU Open School, was elected as Deputy Chair which had become vacant. **Mohammad Nasirul Islam** of BOU also participated in the meeting and workshops.

Girls' Leadership Workshop

From 26 September to 3 October 2014, COL facilitated a workshop, Leadership4Girls4Change, for **10 faculty members of the BOU Open School** and **100 girls enrolled at BOU Open School centres**.

ICT Leadership Workshop

Vice-Chancellors and senior leaders from India, Sri Lanka and **Bangladesh** attended the ICT Leadership Workshop organised by CEMCA and OUSL at Kandy, Sri Lanka. Attending the workshop from Bangladesh was **Professor M. A. Mannan**.

As well, 16 Vice-Chancellors of Bangladesh and two Vice-Chancellors from India attended the ICT Leadership Workshop organised by CEMCA and BOU at Dhaka on 11-12 December 2014.

MATERIALS

Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA Programmes

Initially launched in 2002, the programmes were completely updated in 2013, with 12 courses revised and 10 courses rewritten. One new elective on Business Ethics was added, taking the total number of courses available to 23. Eleven partner institutions are currently offering the CEMBA/CEMPA programme. To date, 24,299 students have enrolled and 11,515

have graduated. For the current triennium, 4,961 have been reported to have enrolled and so far 3,814 have graduated. COL continues to receive updates on enrolment and graduation figures from partner institutions.

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programmes have been offered by the **Bangladesh Open University (BOU)** since its inception in 2002. During 2012–2014, BOU in has had an enrolment of **393 students**; and to date more than **338 students from BOU** have graduated from the programmes.

Print and Video Learning Materials for Skills Training

Dhaka Ahsania Mission developed print and animation video learning materials in five skills training subjects in partnership with COL. The materials articulate to pre-vocational level 1 on the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF). The training courses are being offered through DAM's nearly **900 Community Learning Centres**, as well as being made available to the **200+ NGOs** in Bangladesh, offering skills training via CAMPE. **Sixty members** of the development community attended the launch of the materials in February 2013. Chief guest at the launch was **Mr Md. Nazrul Islam Khan**, Secretary for the Ministry of Information Communication Technology and COL Focal Point. The materials have been translated to English and are available as OER.

Continuous Improvement Toolkit (CR-CIT) for Community Radio

To encourage good practices in community radio, CEMCA has collaboratively developed, with its partner the UNESCO Chair on Community Media at the University of Hyderabad, a continuous improvement toolkit for good community radio practices with community radio practitioners. As a first step, comprehensive desktop research was undertaken to analyse the present scenario and identify indicators. Then a consultation meeting with community radio stations was organised to develop a set of indicators. In April 2013, a consultation meeting was held to review and validate the indicators developed.

On 13 May 2013, CEMCA supported a Validation Workshop on Community Radio Continuous Improvement Toolkit (CR-CIT) organised by the UNESCO Chair on Community Media, University of Hyderabad. Eight community radio experts from India, Bangladesh and Australia, and five community radio practitioners in India, participated in an expert peer-group meeting. They arrived at a broad consensus on non-negotiable principles such as participation, community ownership and management, gender equity, and representation of marginalised groups, and also identified actionable indicators to ensure good community radio practices in the region. **Mr A.H.M. Bazlur Rahman** of Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) attended the meeting as an

international expert. The toolkit, originally published in 2013 and revised in 2014, is available for use on COL's website.

Community Learning Programme (CLP) Developer's Certificate Materials Development

In February 2014, COL convened a course materials workshop in Bangalore, India, to design and develop course materials associated with the Community Learning Programme (CLP) Developer's Certificate. **Mr Sumon Francis Gomes**, of Rupantar, Bangladesh, participated in the workshop as a special member of the CLP course team, responsible for the adaptation of the "Communication for Development (C4D): Why. How. Now." e-course into Bangla.

MODELS

Girls' Innovation Project

In March 2013, COL met with various stakeholders to discuss the outcome of the baseline study conducted for the Girls' Innovation Project and to assist in the development of a work plan. The visit also served to raise awareness about the initiatives, and to sensitise the community about girls' needs, abilities and prospects and create a supportive learning environment. Two funding proposals were developed for the Girls' Innovation Project.

COL Review and Improvement Model (COL-RIM)

COL-RIM implementation was initiated at **BOU** before the end of December 2014 and is currently in progress.

Lifelong Learning for Farmers Model

In December 2014, COL met the Secretary, Ministry of Education, **Mr Md. Nazrul Islam Khan**, and briefed him about the activities of COL in agricultural sector. A meeting was held with **BRAC** to replicate L3F in Bangladesh and plans for a draft proposal are underway.

Healthy Communities Model

Over 40 local communication and health/development organisations have been engaged in Community Learning Programme (CLP) planning and design through a series of local training and mentoring workshops, led by partner **Rupantar**, covering planning, design and delivery of CLP.

In December 2012, COL met with A.H.M. Bazlur Rahman of the Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication to advance partnership and cooperation with other partners in South Asia. COL also met with Rafiqul Islam Kokhan and Swapan Guha, Executive Directors of Rupantar, to advance their plans for developing CLPs. Site visits to Khulna and Jhenidah

were undertaken to consult with community radio groups. Six community media groups were engaged in planning activities under the Healthy Communities initiative in Bangladesh.

As part of COL's collaboration with **Rupantar** to build capacities to develop CLPs on local health and development priorities, Rupantar conducted a survey of 10 community radio stations concerning programme planning, design and delivery practices, with the findings detailed and available in a report (May 2013).

Rupantar has coordinated efforts to build the capacities of a core team within Rupantar itself as well as of representatives of different national and local community media groups, including the Ministry of Agriculture and the Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication, to plan, design and CLPs on priority health and development issues

From 9 to 11 June 2013, CEMCA facilitated a three-day exploratory workshop for sustainable community radio stations in collaboration with the **Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio Communication (BNNRC)**. Hosted by **Radio Mahananda** at Chapai Nawabgunj, the workshop was attended by two representatives from 12 of the 14 community radio stations. A total of **24 people** attended the event (20 men and 4 women).

As a result of training and mentoring, **seven CLPs** have been operationalised through collaborative and participatory processes. In 2013/2014, over 75 hours of CLP content were designed, and had a total estimated listenership of **25,000**. The sites include the following locations and topics:

- ▶ Pabahati, Jhenidah (Suicide; Healthcare of Pregnant Women)
- ▶ Sitakund, Chittagong (Adolescent Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS)
- ▶ Gobratola, Chapai Nawabgonj (Diabetics and First Aid)
- ▶ Nalta, Kalingonj, Satkhira (Maternal Healthcare and Waterborne Disease)
- ▶ Matar Kapon, Shamshernagar Road, Moulvibazar (Maternal Healthcare and Waterborne Disease)
- ▶ Chilmari, Kurigram (Waterborne Disease and Malnutrition)
- ▶ Padma, Rajshahi (Hygiene and Maternal Healthcare)

POLICIES

Regional Consultation on Quality Guidelines for OER

A regional consultation workshop, hosted by Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad from 13 to 15 March 2013 brought together 49 experts from the Asian region to discuss and debate the necessity, usefulness, and relevance of the draft criteria and guidelines for quality OERs. **Professor Abdul Mannan**, Vice-Chancellor of European University of Bangladesh, attended the meeting.

LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

COL is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

VISION: To be the foremost global agency that promotes learning for development

MISSION: To help governments and institutions to expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using open, distance and technology-based approaches

CORE STRATEGIES: Partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policies

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING (COL)

4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500

Burnaby, BC V5H 4M2 Canada

Phone + 604 775 8200 / Fax + 604 775 8210

info@col.org / www.col.org