



*Botswana | Cameroon | Cyprus (Mediterranean) | Ghana | Kenya |
Lesotho | Malawi | Malta (Mediterranean) | Mauritius | Mozambique | Namibia |
Nigeria | Rwanda | Seychelles | Sierra Leone | South Africa | Swaziland | Tanzania | Uganda | Zambia*

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

(AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN)

EBENE CITY

MAURITIUS

May 21-23, 2014



**REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS - AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN
AND COL STAFF**



REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING – AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Ebene, Mauritius

May 21-23, 2014

The Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean took place at Hennessy Park Hotel, Mauritius from May 21-23, 2014. Focal Points from 17 countries in Africa and the Mediterranean participated in the meeting (*Participants list attached - Annex A*). The Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research & Technology and the Open University of Mauritius supported the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) in organising the workshop. It was facilitated by Professor Asha Kanwar, President and Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Vis Naidoo, Vice President; Dr. Godson Gatsha, Education Specialist - Higher Education and Dr. Kodhandaraman Balasubramanian, Education Specialist - Agriculture and Livelihoods.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Determine the issues in Learning for Development and identify the key priorities and the need for education and human resource development in using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Africa and the Mediterranean;
2. Identify the Commonwealth of Learning (COL)'s role in addressing the needs in the region.

The sub-objectives were to:

1. Build the knowledge of COL, its identity and purpose;
2. Understand the rationale of the current programmes and initiatives;
3. Learn about the role of the COL Focal Points and ways to improve engagements and partnerships in country;
4. Identify the opportunities for COL to explore in its new strategic plan so that it addresses the education and training needs of member Commonwealth countries;
5. Increase awareness of gender issues in Africa and the Mediterranean and what role COL can play in addressing these; and
6. Complete a draft Logic Model for the next three years (2015-2018) noting current needs and global development agendas.

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

INAUGURATION OF FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The Director-General of the Open University of Mauritius (OUM), Dr. Kaviraj Sharma Sukon, welcomed all the Focal Points and COL staff to Mauritius. In his welcoming remarks, he highlighted the role of distance education and its benefits in terms of being affordable and shared briefly the developments and growth of OUM and how it serves the nation by taking university education to the door steps of learners. He thanked COL for supporting OUM with the CEMBA/CEMPA programmes that have helped establish the University. He elaborated on the support provided by government and in particular the Minister of Education & Human Resources and the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research & Technology in Mauritius in strengthening open and distance learning (ODL).

The President and Chief Executive Officer of COL, Professor Asha Kanwar, thanked the two Ministers and the Government of Mauritius for hosting the COL Focal Points for the second time and for the valuable support the Ministers always render to COL. She thanked the Mauritius COL Focal Point for her active participation in organising the meeting.

Professor Kanwar described the evolution of COL as an intergovernmental organisation and pointed out that in the last two decades, it has emerged as a pioneering institution for translating the vision of learning for development into field reality. She noted the multi-stakeholder involvement and the participatory approach have helped COL to be perceived as a partner organisation with various stakeholders. The Focal Points meeting represents one dimension of the participatory approach through which COL defines its Three-Year Plan.

She highlighted the work of COL in Mauritius and specifically indicated that COL has supported the OUM in the online content development, research skills in ODL, and the CEMBA/CEMPA programmes. She further indicated that COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative has been working with a number of Ministries including Gender and Agriculture.

She also highlighted her appreciation of the Tertiary Education Commission's ODL showcasing workshop which was held on May 19, 2014. She pointed out that it demonstrated the uptake of open distance education by both public and private institutions in Mauritius. She also commended the Prime Minister's vision and its five pillars – energy, equity, education, employment and environment and pointed out that COL is already working within the framework with at least three of the vision pillars.

Before concluding, Professor Kanwar highlighted the objectives of the COL Focal Points meeting. She indicated that the meeting would focus on the key priorities that countries have identified and as such COL would listen to what the countries would desire the organisation to do in terms of supporting their key initiatives. She also indicated what COL had done in their respective countries would be shared with the Ministers of Education during CCEM.

The Honourable Rajeshwar Jeetah, Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research & Technology, in his Chief Guest address, welcomed the participants to Mauritius and noted the issues related to higher

education specifically the need to widen access, improve quality and relevance, internationalisation and research. He further noted that since the last Focal Points meeting held in Mauritius in 2011, there have been major developments in ODL in Mauritius and as such Mauritius has a fully-fledged Open University as part of widening access to higher education so that they achieve at least one graduate per family. He highlighted that by widening access, OUM had, within a period of two years, an enrolment of 3,000 of which 70% are women. Other highlights pointed out by the Minister included:

- Partnerships with universities in Africa and overseas especially in the UK and USA
- Benefits from COL support at OUM e.g. CEMBA/CEMPA programmes
- OUM's desire to open a campus in Uganda
- OUM's participation in the Pan African e-Network supported by the Indian Government
- The plan to develop an Open Learning Policy for Higher Education
- The provision of 50 scholarships to learners from the African continent.

The Minister ended his remarks by thanking the President and Chief Executive Officer of COL and appreciating the excellent working relationship with COL and invited delegates to find time to visit some of the beaches in Mauritius.

SESSION 1

OVERVIEW OF COL: VALUES, MISSION AND STRUCTURE: PROMOTING LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT BY COL PRESIDENT

Mr. Vis Naidoo, the Vice President of COL, took the participants through the objectives of the two and half days Focal Points meeting. He said that the meeting would provide an opportunity to share information about the status of ODL in each participating country. IT will also enable the Focal Points to understand the activities of COL in their respective countries and region and identify the priorities that COL can address during three-year period of 2015-2018.

Mr. Naidoo further led the participants to appreciate the agenda for the two and half days and drew participants' attention to the 2012-2015 Logic Model and posed questions relating to how the next 2015-2018 Logic Model would look like given the respective countries' key priorities and global trends in terms of the post-2015 goals. The participants were then requested to consider amendments to the agenda before adoption. The workshop agenda was adopted without amendment.

Professor Asha Kanwar then described the vision, mission and the structure of COL pointed out that:

- Priorities differ from region to region
- Priorities have changed since the last meeting in 2011 due to changes in the world
- Gender is still key priority
- Other priorities include adult literacy, HIV, and maternal health.

Professor Kanwar drew the participants' attention to the genesis of COL and explained why COL headquarters are in Canada and also informed the participants that in 2013, COL celebrated its 25th birthday and over that time, COL has re-invented itself. She traced COL's initiatives since its beginning by highlighting that *Higher Education* was initially the priority of focus. However due to the new needs to address the issue of universal primary education, *teacher education and secondary education*, meant that COL had to focus on new areas, resulting in COL changing. She pointed out that during the last 15 years COL has been looking at the role of ODL in strengthening livelihoods and health through formal and non-formal learning.

She further outlined the broad representation of COL in terms of governance with Board Members being drawn across the Commonwealth regions. She also shared with participants the COL supported centres i.e. CEMCA, RETRIDOL, SADC-CDE, and two new centres in the Pacific and Caribbean which are being formalised. She also highlighted the importance for member countries' contribution and COL Focal Points' role in assisting in getting their respective country's contribution to ensure that COL can be enabled to facilitate learning for development. She expressed gratitude for the voluntary contributions being made by their respective countries.

She further highlighted the capability approach, i.e. moving from outputs to outcomes, from capacity to capability, from skills or functioning to the ability to exercise freedoms, and demonstrated how learning develops capability for personal development, livelihoods etc.

She also touched on:

- What COL has been working on for the past three years and this included Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- COL programmes and strategies i.e. policy, models, capacity (for scaling up capability) materials (Open Educational Resources [OER]) and partnerships
- What ODL & ICT can do, for instance ODL can reduce costs and have a wider reach.
- The work plan matrix that Focal Points would receive, for feedback by November 2014, before the next strategic plan is finalised and shared with the Commonwealth Education Ministers.
- Previous Focal Points meetings and priorities that were identified at the time.

Before concluding her presentation, Professor Kanwar noted critical issues that would need attention beyond 2015 i.e.

- The unmet MDGs goals – and the need for transforming some of these goals into sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- Teacher shortage as a big priority
- Gender equality as a major priority
- Poverty eradication through L3F and Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)
- Reduction of Mother and Child mortality through Healthy Communities.

In the light of the above, she explained COL's approach i.e. minimum intervention for maximum impact and the need to continue to address universal primary education, secondary education and tertiary education depending on the needs of each country. She highlighted:

- The need to harness technology i.e. appropriate technology
- Regional focus i.e. Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific.
- Post-2015 target for instance, ending poverty, empowering girls and women
- Educational framework for COMSEC post-2015 i.e. access, quality and equity
- UNESCO slogan: equitable, quality education & lifelong learning for all by 2030

Finally she shared with the Focal Points about what COL could do for them, i.e.

- Work with them
- Provide expertise in learning-technology,
- Promote south-to-south collaboration,
- Share quality resources in ODL and e-learning and models.

The Focal Points raised the following issues during the discussion

- On collaboration between countries: RETRIDOL Advisory Board was cited as one way in which countries in West Africa work together.
- On simplifying the role of Focal Points in the context of working with various multi-lateral organisations: It was explained that COL has agreements and as such works together with UNESCO, UNICEF etc. to avoid duplication of efforts
- On Special Needs education particularly for differentially abled groups: It was noted that COL has not been involved much but would consider addressing the issue especially through ICT.

The Focal Points appreciated the purpose of COL and its focus of work.

Mr. Naidoo's presentation focused on the COL's programme. He explained that COL operates in two sectors. In the sector of Education, it works through initiatives such as Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education and Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). In the Livelihoods and Health sector, it concentrates on TVSD, L3F and Healthy Communities. He elaborated the role of e-Learning and Gender as cross cutting themes across all the initiatives.

The following issues were discussed vis-à-vis the presentations of the President and the Vice President.

- The Focal Points wanted to know the scope of enlarging and sustaining COL's activities in their respective countries: It was pointed out to them that, COL is more of a catalyst than a funder or donor, works more on models that can be scaled up or replicated by the stakeholders in their respective countries.
- Since COL is involved in activities which fall beyond the purview of the Ministry of Education, the Focal Points wanted to know the modalities of working with other ministries as well as with other stakeholders. Ghana shared its experience of working with various ministries and

stakeholders and emphasised the importance of a proactive collaborative approach by COL and the Focal Points.

- The Focal Points requested COL to develop methodologies for recognising prior learning and help in supporting the development of accreditation frameworks.



SESSION 2

PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION SECTOR

Dr. Godson Gatsha elaborated the role of the Focal Points. He pointed out that they act as a one stop window for all COL related activities in the country and that their roles include:

- Coordinating with other ministries (agriculture, health, etc.)
- Disseminating of COL-related information
- Meeting with visiting COL staff
- Keeping the Minister and Ministry briefed about COL's activities
- Following-up on timely release of contribution
- Being advocates for ODL & COL
- Providing advice & guidance to COL.

Then he described the priorities which COL could address during its next Three-Year Plan of 2015-2018. These priorities were identified by the Focal Points based on their respective national strategies. The following were identified as key priorities:

- Open schooling (classrooms without walls)
- Capacity building in setting up open universities (Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Namibia, Botswana, Rwanda)
- ODL Management
- eLearning/online course development & tutoring
- Staff Professional development (including theory & practice of ODL)

- VUSSC Transnational Qualifications Framework
- Instructional design & materials development (repurposing)
- Teacher development (ICT & ODL Methodologies)
- Use of ICTs in ODL provision
- Networking with partners for ICT infrastructure/facilities development
- Integration of ODL, e-Learning at all levels of education & learner support
- Developing TVET instructors' competencies & competency-based curriculum design
- Child friendly schools (roll-out)
- Development of quality assurance systems
- ODL Policy development/formulation
- Research in ODL issues
- Quality assurance systems.



SESSION 3

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH SECTOR PRIORITIES

Dr. K. Balasubramanian in his presentation pointed out that TVSD, Agriculture and Community Health have been identified as priorities by many Focal Points. However, the priorities have been defined in broad generic terms. He felt that since the Focal Points are mainly from the Ministries of Education; they may not have had access to the priorities set by the other ministries and stakeholders.

He shared the COL's Impact Statement:

A substantive and equitable increase in the number of Commonwealth citizens acquiring the knowledge and skills for leading productive and healthy lives through formal and non-formal open and distance learning opportunities.

He requested the Focal Points to look into the scope of scaling up the models evolved by COL and define the priorities in terms of existing institutional arrangements and policy frameworks. He raised the following questions:

- Can ODL add value to the development process?

- What type of partners should be involved through whom the models can be scaled up and replicated?

Dr. Balasubramanian further emphasised learning for development in terms of *theory of change* i.e. *impact, outcome, outputs, activities and input*. He then presented the three initiatives in the context of Rural Economies, Urban Economies and Mixed Economies of Africa. He gave a picture of TVSD and explained the initiative activities vis-à-vis , the expected outcome, Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA), Innovation in Vocational Education and Skills Training (INVEST) and Women in TVET.

The Focal Points felt that an outcome and impact-based approach is essential. While discussing the TVSD, they highlighted the following points:

- The scope of TVSD should be perceived vis-à-vis the labour market and nature of economic development
- Skills Development should be perceived beyond institutional and organisational development
- Focus to be on core skills rather than just knowledge
- A linear approach is not necessarily the best but the context does matter too in determining the strategy to be used
- Recognition of prior learning (Zambia example was shared)
- Paradigm shift from classification to lifelong learning; from imparting cognitive skills to non-cognitive skills; life skills, competency based testing
- Not all learning occurs in formal educational institutions and hence other types of institutions and stakeholders should also be involved.

A recap of the day's deliberations was led by Mr. Naidoo *and he wanted the Focal Points to assess the strategies which COL should follow*. A brief insight of what would follow the next day was made.



THURSDAY, MAY 22

SESSION 4

Mr. Naidoo welcomed the participants and outlined the focus of the day. A reflection on the priorities was made with participants being requested to make observations and additions. And gender mainstreaming was suggested as an additional priority.

It was noted that Livelihoods and Health took a different approach and the following critical questions were asked:

- How do we move from output level to outcome?
- What strategies do we employ?
- What is the kind of impact do we want to achieve?
- How do we bring different entities together e.g. on issues of HIV/AIDS in Seychelles?

And on strategies TVSD has been using, the key questions raised were:

- To what end do we employ the key strategies?
- What impact will we have?
- How does this relate to the priorities of your country?

Further it was noted that the world is moving more and more towards lifelong learning.

In terms of issues for COL's strategy in order to contribute to learning for development, the participants felt that a strong regional collaboration would help to understand more about learning for development. They felt that linkages between countries with similar priorities and fostering exchange between Focal Points through various means including electronic means needed to be encouraged. Capacity building to evolve open universities in countries like Malawi and Uganda was also discussed. They wanted COL to inform them not only about the visit of COL staff but also about the visits of COL consultants. One of the Focal Points requested COL to elaborate the process of converting capacity into capability and it was pointed out that the theory of change approach could be used for such conversion.

SESSION 5

UNDERSTANDING GENDER IN AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Dr. Balasubramanian gave a description of the approach of COL in mainstreaming gender in programmes as well as in the organisation. He presented to the Focal Points the definitions and conceptual frameworks for gender as a social construct and differentiated from sex, which is a biological construct. He explained the role and impact of gender in economic and social development of Commonwealth countries. He

contrasted gender with “women in development approach” while pointing out that a gender analysis may result in adopting a women in development approach.

When the Focal Points asked the scope of integrating gender in ODL, Dr. Balasubramanian pointed out that, it could be done at three levels:

1. Mainstreaming gender in ODL institutions
2. Developing courses and materials with a gender sensitive approach.
3. Defining the programmes and projects in a gender-responsive manner and looking at the inputs, activities, budgets, outputs and outcomes in terms of gender.

He gave the example of the Healthy Communities initiative of COL and described the experiences in Malawi. He pointed out that the gender analysis of women and child health indicated the need for involving women not only as listeners and learners but also as partners in defining the programme in terms of planning, implementing and monitoring and evaluation.

The Focal Points raised the issue of mainstreaming gender in formal education particularly in higher education. Mauritius and Namibia pointed out that they had evolved a gender policy for education particularly higher education in their respective countries. Other Focal Points requested for the copies of the documents and COL promised that the materials would be sent to them once procured from Mauritius and Namibia.

SESSION 6

eLEARNING AT COL

The cross cutting theme of eLearning was discussed during this session. It was emphasised that COL’s use of technology takes into consideration issues like infrastructure – hardware, bandwidth, learner access, learner readiness, instructor readiness etc. The role of COL in influencing the discourses on policies for ICT in education in countries was explained. Similarly the scope for OER in influencing the outcomes in education sector was also discussed.

During this session, Mr. Naidoo showcased one of the products from COL, the *Aptus* gadget. Participants were informed about *Aptus*, an innovation by COL called *classroom without walls*. It was indicated that when using the *Aptus* gadget which works offline, learners are enabled to have an opportunity to experience some internet based learning just like those learners with internet connectivity.

Community Media was also highlighted as another initiative developed by COL for Healthy Communities and L3F. Other initiatives shared with participants were the:

- Directory of Open Educational Resources (DOER) and
- Open Textbooks initiative undertaken in the Caribbean

Dr. Balasubramanian asked participants to discuss invention and innovation. Invention was described as the creation of a new product/service whilst innovation was described as transforming a product for socio-economic benefit. This helped to explain how the concept of *Aptus* was developed or assembled. The concept is meant to create a local area network. The demonstration impressed the participants and generated interest after they managed to connect and browse the content uploaded in *Aptus*.

SESSION 7

FOCUS ON 2015 -2018 THREE-YEAR PLAN

Mr. Naidoo outlined the objectives of the session and the critical areas of focus. Participants were made to reflect on the MDGs and EFA challenges and achievements. He highlighted the debate and drawbacks about the achievement of goals. Other issues raised included:

- the value of the MDGs
- the unmet goals
- COL's approach,
- challenges that are emerging as a result of addressing the MDGs
- Ways of harnessing technology.

In the light of the foregoing, a question was about COL's tagline; *Learning for Development*, i.e. should it remain as it is?

Participants were encouraged to read the UN report on the development agenda post-2015. It was also emphasised that in order to transform economic development, the issue of *sustainable development* would need to be top of any future agenda towards global partnership. The 12 new development goals were discussed. The issue of transformation and the seven cross cutting issues were covered.

The presentation and reflection from the past and present was highly appreciated by participants. Participants were able to reflect on the MDGs and EFA achievements at country level and identified some of the short-comings.

Participants also reflected on the issue of the tagline and the general view was that the decision to change or not to change should be based on whether the motto has been achieved or not, i.e. COL continues with the tagline because it is still relevant or discontinues because it is no longer relevant. The issue of the tagline was deferred to the next session i.e. the theory of change. The key question that also rose focused on what COL had achieved. The debate on which of the goals should be priority, led participants to assess each goal on the basis of country contexts and Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. Other views expressed in terms of country level indicated that there would be different priorities for different ministries.

SESSION 8

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR AN OUTCOME BASED APPROACH

Dr. Balasubramanian presented the following slide:

Learning for Development		
Category	Description	Significance
Impact	Quality of Life, development	What they achieve
Outcome	Employability, entrepreneurship, income, Return on investment, empowerment, economic growth	What they do
Outputs	Students enrolling, students passing	What we achieve
Activities	Courses, materials, delivery examinations, technology accessed	What we do
Inputs	Human and financial resources, technology	What we invest

This is empowerment and transformation. Do we have the roadmap?

Source: modified from Margarita F Guerrero (UNSIAP)

He pointed out that theory of change provides the roadmap leading to outcomes and impact from outputs. He highlighted that, the theory of change approach tries to answer the following questions:

- What is the challenge? Why is this challenge?
- What needs to change to address this challenge? What is preventing this change?
- How can we overcome these barriers?
- What assumptions underpin our approach? What are the key risks?
- What outcomes will this achieve? What impacts will this deliver?

The theory of change is applied in the logframe which is similar to a project framework. The linkages between inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts are described with risks and assumptions. It uses backward mapping with “if-then...” and “so that...” connections. There are three main elements in the theory of change:

- A backward mapping process that begins with outcomes to plan, implement, and continuously develop and improve programs
- Designing interventions or activities intended to create desired results, and linking them systematically

- Carefully articulating assumptions about how change will occur and testing the assumptions systematically through evaluation

Dr. Balasubramanian explained the theory of change approach in the L3F initiative. He advised that the theory of change approach is not confined to Livelihoods and Health sector and non-formal learning. It can be applied equally to formal education such as Higher Education for instance; how can a graduating student be gainfully employed or become entrepreneur and contribute to the society.

The participants pointed out that while planning open universities and other relevant institutions, the theory of change approach could be integrated. They requested COL to build the capacity of the participating countries in integrating such an approach both in Education and Livelihoods and Health sectors.

SESSION 9

THEME OR CLUSTERS-HOW SHOULD COL MANAGE ITS WORK?

Mr. Naidoo requested the Focal Points to look at the current COL Logic Model and address the following questions:

- How should COL manage its work?
- Should COL focus on themes or clusters when constructing the logic model?
- Is there any other model to reflect on COL's key focus areas?
- How can the model enable co-operation between areas of education (formal & informal) and training?
- How will any proposal support learning and development?

In order to get feedback on these questions, the Focal Points worked in three groups to discuss the possible responses.

Group 1 felt that the emphasis should be more on themes. They suggested that the categories should not be restricted but be determined by context and felt that COL could play a monitoring role in various countries.

Group 2 felt that COL should work through themes and they should be mainstreaming and institutionalisation of ODL at all levels of education. There should be more emphasis on human resource development and strengthening of COL's monitoring and evaluation role.

Group 3 argued that COL should work in clusters.

FRIDAY, MAY 23

SESSION 10

The day started with a recap by Mr. Naidoo about what had transpired in the previous two days. He also outlined the focus of the last day i.e. the COL Logic Model for 2015-2018. He drew the Focal Points' attention to the following:

- Review of the current Logic Model in terms of any changes to:
 - ✓ vision,
 - ✓ mission
 - ✓ core strategies and
 - ✓ strategic goals

Further the following questions were provided to guide group discussions:

- What initiatives should COL focus on?
- Which of the current initiatives should remain and any other new initiatives?
- What cross cutting initiatives (if any) should COL focus on?
- And also suggestion on outcomes and indicators for any of the initiatives recommended by the Focal Points.



COMPLETING THE COL LOGIC MODEL 2015 – 2018

The Focal Points worked in groups and made the suggestions indicated in the table below

	<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>
Vision	Added: -for sustainable development	to be the foremost global urgency that promotes ODL	Added sustainable .
Mission	and institutions including the Private Sector and Civil society	To help member countries to expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning at all levels of education by using open learning approaches	Added: government and organisation
Core Strategies	Added: Capacity and capability ...	Added: gender equality	Added: ... to act as a catalyst for capacity, models etc.
Strategies			Increase to affordable primary education ... and lifelong learning and marginalised women and girls
Strategic goals	Quality Education and Training for all Commonwealth citizens Added: ...access and equity to relevant affordable formal and non-formal primary... Education and training... Human Resource ...replicable capacity building systems ... Harnessing ODL... ... of governments, private sector and civil society to provide cost effective quality...		dealing with livelihoods by adding non-formal education
Initiative	Keep them as is	replace with theme	Keep them as is
Theme		Institutionalising ODL across all levels of education sub themes: 1. establish and support institutions at all education levels – establish VUSSC as an independent entity run by small states 3. Establish open learning system to train teachers, lecturers and instructors 4. Increase skills levels in member countries through ODL.	

	<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>
Cross-cutting			added – creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
Outcome		<p>1 Institutions are established that have ODL systems, materials and staff in place to provide quality education to increase number of people.</p> <p>More learners have quality education through Open learning.</p> <p>VUSSC is established as an independent entity</p> <p>2 ODL methodologies are used to provide quality training of larger numbers of teachers and instructors.</p> <p>Research capacities are developed</p> <p>3 Technical and vocational skills levels are increased in member countries.</p> <p>Marginalised groups are economically empowered is improved.</p> <p>Health status of marginalised groups improved.</p>	More learners are engaged in purposeful experiences that promote skills competences related to the initiative.
PI			<p>At least one activity is organised by COL to spearhead the cross-cutting theme.</p> <p>Each country demonstrate one of the cross-cutting issues</p> <p>Diversity is possible as another initiative/theme</p>

REFLECTIONS ON THE FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The reflections are based on expressions as directly articulated by the Focal Points:

- Very interesting and now I know people that I did not know. It was great to meet part of the COL family. And the Focal Point of Zambia indicated that he would be retiring in a month's time.
- The involvement of the Focal Points was appreciated as it involved member countries. The consultative strategy for the planning process was highly appreciated.

- The meeting afforded an opportunity to appreciate each country's progress and challenges
- The process was very interactive, however the session on the role of the Focal Points, was rushed due to time constraints, more time should have been spent on it
- COL's role and assistance had been made clear and as such they knew how to make requests for help
- The hospitality of Mauritius was highly appreciated.
- It was a very enriching experience and the programme was well packaged. However time was always not adequate
- Scope and knowledge had been widened. The meeting had been very impressive
- Gratitude was conveyed to COL
- Given the limited resources, the Focal Points were asked to request their respective governments to make more contributions to COL.

CLOSING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF COL

Professor Asha Kanwar thanked the Focal Points for:

- attending the meeting
- their pre-meeting activities that included undertaking research in order to produce the country reports and
- their intense participation.

Professor Kanwar noted some of the issues which were discussed during the workshop included:

- gender
- gender mainstreaming
- life-long learning
- theory of change, etc.

She advised the Focal Points that they should not be surprised or disappointed when the final strategy comes out and it appears as if what they had said had not been included because the process had not yet been completed and as such what they had said would appear in some form. She further commended the Focal Points and told them that their role in short, was that of being COL's ambassadors in the field and emphasised that innovation in the field could only be realised with their support in their respective countries.

She appreciated the commitment of the Minister of Education & Human Resources and the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research & Technology in Mauritius and thanked the colleagues from Mauritius who provided the support services to the meeting. She finally thanked the Permanent Secretary for Education in Mauritius for attending most of the meetings despite her tight schedule and wished all participants safe travel back to their respective countries.



**REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING
(AFRICA & THE MEDITERRANEAN)**

Ebene City, Mauritius
May 21-23, 2014

Participants List

FOCAL POINTS/ALTERNATES

Country	Name of Focal Point and Contact Details
1. Botswana	<p>Ms. Fancy Amey Dean, Student Services Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning Private Bag BO187 Gaborone Botswana</p> <p>Tel: +267 717 73094 (Cell) Email: famey@bocodol.ac.bw</p>
2. Cameroon (Did not attend)	<p>Professor Ivo Leke Tambo Secretary General Ministry of Basic Education BP 1600 Yaoundé Cameroon</p> <p>Tel: +237 77 606 661 Email: leketambo@rocketmail.com</p> <p>Dr. Daniel Akume Akume Head of the Computerised System for the Management of Staff and Salaries Ministry of Higher Education BP 1739 Yaoundé Cameroon</p> <p>Tel: +237 7768 1647 (Cell) Email: d_akume@yahoo.ca</p>

Country	Name of Focal Point and Contact Details
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17. Uganda	<p>Ms. Elizabeth K. M. Gabona Director Higher, Technical, Vocational Education & Training Ministry of Education and Sports PO Box 7063 Kampala Uganda</p> <p>Tel: +256 41 233 391 Email: besig@hotmail.com</p>
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19. Cyprus (Did not attend)	<p>Professor George Angelos Papadopoulos Professor of Computer Science University of Cyprus PO Box 20537 CY-1678 Nicosia Cyprus</p> <p>Tel: +357 22 892 693 Email: george@cs.ucy.ac.cy</p>
20. Malta	<p>Mr. Ian B. Mifsud Director (Quality Assurance Department) Directorate for Quality & Standards in Education Ministry of Education and Employment Great Siege Road Floriana VLT 2000 Malta</p> <p>Tel: +356 2598 2492 +356 9988 2553 (Cell) Email: ian.b.mifsud@gov.mt</p> <p><i>Mr. Ian B. Mifsud is representing:</i></p> <p>Mr. George Borg Director, Student Services Department Directorate for Educational Services Ministry of Education and Employment Fra Gaetano Pace Forno Street Hamrun HMR 1100 Malta</p> <p>Tel: +356 2122 8349 Email: george.a.borg@gov.mt</p>

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**REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING
(AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN)**

AGENDA

Date: May 21-23, 2014

Time: 9:00-17:15 hours

Place: Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene

Accommodation: Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene (*formerly Ebene Link Hotel*),

Tel: (230) 403 7200

THEME:

To explore education and the use of technology and distance learning methods in development.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the meeting are to:

1. Determine the key priorities and needs for education and training in the Africa & the Mediterranean; and
2. Identify COL's role in addressing these key needs in the region.

SUB-OBJECTIVES:

1. Build the knowledge of COL, its identity and purpose;
2. Understand the rationale of the current programmes and initiatives;
3. Learn about the role of the COL Focal Points and ways to improve engagements and partnerships in country;
4. Identify the opportunities for COL to explore in its new strategic plan so that it addresses the education and training needs of member Commonwealth countries;
5. Increase awareness of gender issues in Africa and the Mediterranean and what role COL can play in addressing these; and
6. Complete a draft Logic Model for the next three years (2015 – 2018) noting current needs and global development agendas.

AGENDA**Date: Wednesday, May 21****Time: 9:00-17:15 hours**

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
8:30-9:00	REGISTRATION, TEA/COFFEE		
9:00-10:00	Inauguration of Focal Points meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and objectives of meeting • Welcome Remarks • Participant introductions • Address – by Minister • Focal Points Photo with Minister and other guests 	Plenary presentations	Vis Naidoo Director of Ceremonies Asha Kanwar All All
10:00-10:45	Adoption of Agenda Participants expectations Overview of COL: Value, Mission, Structure	Plenary discussion Plenary presentation and discussion	Vis Naidoo All Asha Kanwar
10:45-11:15	TEA/COFFEE		
11:15-12:00	Function & Programmes (<i>focus on learning for development and how this is translated in current TYP</i>)	Plenary presentation and discussion	Vis Naidoo
12:00-13:00	Role of Focal Points	Plenary presentation and discussion	Godson Gatsha
13:00-14:00	LUNCH		
14:00-15:30	Analysis of priorities identified in the Education and Training Sector in Africa & the Mediterranean	Short presentation – key issues to focus on and noting trends in the regions (15 min). Group discussions (responses to key questions - 45min). Plenary report-back (30min).	Godson Gatsha <i>Rapporteur – Bala</i>

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
<i>Date: Wednesday, May 21 (cont'd)</i>			
15:30-16:00	TEA/COFFEE		
16:00-17:00	Priorities in Livelihoods and Health Sector in Africa & the Mediterranean	Plenary discussion (based on input and current analysis and engagements/discussions in Africa) Plenary	K Bala <i>Rapporteur – Godson</i>
17:00-17.15	Wrap up of day, house-keeping		Vis Naidoo
18:30	Dinner hosted by the Open University of Mauritius		

AGENDA**Date: Thursday, May 22****Time: 9:00-17:00 hours**

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
8:30-9:00	TEA/COFFEE		
9:00-10:00	Welcome to Day 2. Recap of the day Completion of priority grid for education and training & livelihoods.	Plenary discussion	Vis Naidoo
10:00-11:30	Understanding Gender in Africa and the Mediterranean. Ideas for Gender Programming.	Plenary presentation (including from the Ministry of Gender - Mauritius – 30 min) Group discussion (30min) Plenary report back (30min)	K Bala All <i>Rapporteur – Vis Naidoo</i>
11:30-12:30	Technology innovations and introduction to <i>Aptus</i> (as an example of innovation), DOER, MOOC, online courses, print materials. <i>[For consideration – short presentation on trends in LMS – to share with Focal Points]</i>	Plenary presentation (current developments and trends. COL's approach to technology and information on COL's work)	Vis Naidoo & K Bala <i>Rapporteur – Godson Gatsha</i>
12:30-13:30	LUNCH		
13:30-14:30	Focus on 2015 – 2018: What should COL focus on in support of learning and development? Which goals in the emerging global framework should COL focus on?	Presentation (20min) – Commonwealth focus and post 2015 Global Goals Plenary discussion (40min) - generation of ideas based on analysis of education, livelihoods, gender, innovation.	Vis Naidoo <i>Rapporteur – Godson</i>
14:30-15:30	Theory of change	Presentation and plenary discussion.	K Bala

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
<i>Date: Thursday, May 22 (cont'd)</i>			
15.30-17.00	How should COL manage its work – themes, clusters, education sectors, etc.?	Short presentation (10 min). Group discussions. 45min. Plenary presentations and discussion (35min)	Vis Naidoo <i>Rapporteur – K Bala</i>
18:30	Dinner hosted by COL.		

AGENDA**Date: Friday, May 23****Time: 9:00-16:00 hours**

Time	Session	Format	Facilitator/Presenter
9:00	TEA/COFFEE		
9:00-11:30	Completing the COL Logic Model (2015 – 2018). Guide the session – Review the vision, mission, core strategies, and goals. Note current Initiatives. What should COL focus on in terms of Initiatives? What new areas does the Focal Points recommend? Identify indicators (for Africa & the Mediterranean). What should the X-cutting Initiatives be and their indicators?	Plenary presentation (10 min) – current Logic Model Group work (45min) Report back and discussion (35min)	Vis All <i>Rapporteur – Bala</i>
11.30-12.30	Summary Reflections of the meeting by all participants Closing remarks	Plenary discussion	Vis Naidoo All Asha Kanwar
12:30-13:30	LUNCH		
13:30-16:00	Field Visit		