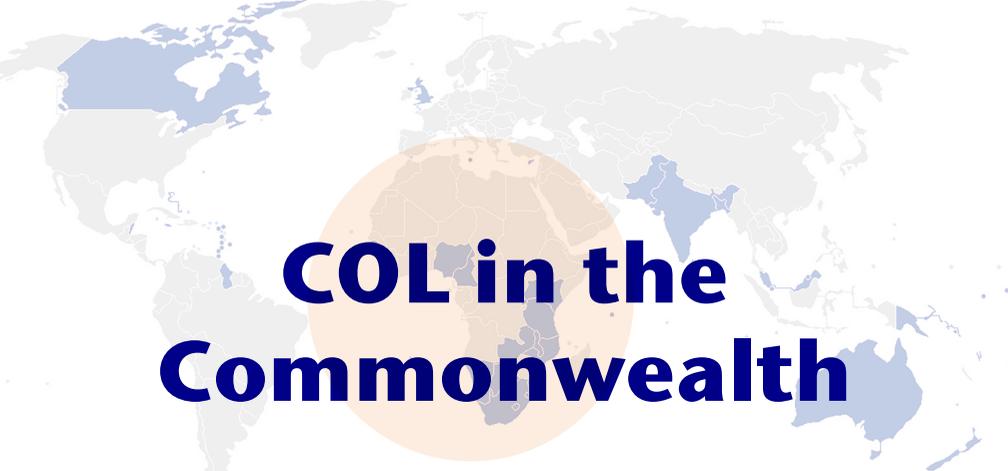




COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING



COL in the Commonwealth

2018–2020 HIGHLIGHTS

UGANDA

LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

TARGETS 2021



Improved sustainable livelihoods
300,000 PEOPLE



470
ORGANISATIONS
Improved organisational
capacity to leverage ODL

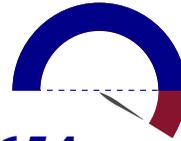


1.4 million
PEOPLE
Increased and equitable
access to, and use of, quality
learning opportunities

ACHIEVED BY 2020



257,484 people



Target
EXCEEDED

654 organisations



880,039 people



Introduction

Since its creation some 30 years ago, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has become a true catalyst for positive change for a third of the world's population. Our vision of “learning for sustainable development” means that learning must lead to social inclusion, economic growth and environmental conservation. This aligns COL's work with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote learning opportunities for all.”

COL harnesses the potential of open, distance and technology-enabled learning to help Member States accelerate progress towards achieving development outcomes.



To achieve outcomes and impact, COL has led six paradigm shifts:

- If the child cannot go to school, the school comes to the child.
- Technology-enabled learning can break open the ivory towers of tertiary education.
- Open educational resources (OER) are the answer to closed and costly textbooks.
- The digital divide can be transformed into a digital dividend.
- Literacy is not always a precondition for learning.
- The social capital of the mother is the most important determinant in bringing girls to school.

What are COL's key success factors? COL aligns its work with global priorities and ensures that it stays relevant to Member States' needs and priorities. COL is relevant, responsive and results oriented. The 2018–2020 Country Highlights summarise COL's progress towards achieving SDG4.

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



Highlights

Working in two sectors, Education and Skills, with Gender as a crosscutting theme, COL uses pioneering models and approaches to achieve impact.

- COL has developed an innovative employability framework to strengthen and evaluate the impact of higher education institutions on graduates' employability, with a focus on industry and labour-market engagement.
- GIRLS Inspire has reached close to 81,000 girls and young women in remote and unreached communities, providing schooling and skilling them for livelihoods.
- The Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) model is being upscaled in partnership with national banks, moving from the meso to the macro level.
- The Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action (C-DELTA) programme is now being implemented across the Commonwealth.
- Ambitious projects to improve gender equality in two Commonwealth regions have been launched. These holistic models are based on community mobilisation and address areas such as capacity building in education, gender-based violence, health, empowerment, economic opportunities, and policy.
- Blockchain technology, built according to open standards, was used to issue certificates for massive open online courses (MOOCs) in different disciplines.
- COL has developed a comprehensive solution for data resilience in education for small states facing climate-related disasters.
- The ninth Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF9), held in Edinburgh, brought together close to 550 thought leaders, policy makers and practitioners to share best practices and harness innovation for change, with a view to providing employability skills to young people, offering a quality education to all regardless of circumstances, and identifying practical ways for technology to speed up our progress.



UGANDA

COL works with partners in Uganda to expand access to quality education and lifelong learning for all. Mr Armoogum Parsuramen, Founder-President, Global Rainbow Foundation, Mauritius, represents Africa on COL's Board of Governors. Ms Jolly Uzamukunda Karabaaya, Commissioner, Higher Education and Training, Ministry of Education and Sports, is COL's Focal Point for Uganda.

COL's current work in Uganda is primarily in the areas of higher education, lifelong learning for farmers (L3F) and technology-enabled learning (TEL). Learners from Uganda have benefited from COL's open online courses and other resources.

The following are the highlights from 2018 to 2020.



Programmes

HIGHER EDUCATION

The Higher Education initiative works with ministries and higher education institutions to increase equitable access to tertiary education and to address the needs of industry and national development through the use of policies, systems, models and gender-responsive learning resources.

Through the Partnership for Enhanced and Blended Learning project (PEBL), led by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, COL is supporting the development of quality assurance (QA) mechanisms for blended learning courses at three Ugandan universities. In April 2018, a workshop on *Quality Assurance for Blended Learning* was conducted in Nairobi, Kenya with six partners and participating universities from Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

In November 2019, a *Quality Assurance in Blended Learning* workshop was hosted by Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya as a continuation of capacity-building efforts under

the aegis of PEBL. The workshop brought together senior administrators and faculty from 21 universities located in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

Through PEBL, COL is also supporting Makerere University and Kampala International University to develop QA mechanisms for blended learning courses.

In April 2019, an online course on *Quality Assurance in Blended Learning* was launched on COL's Higher Education initiative Moodle platform, with 39 QA practitioners enrolled. A second online course, on *Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa*, was developed by COL later in the year and piloted in November, with 42 QA practitioners enrolled.

In the framework of the Higher Education initiative, COL has been supporting Busitema University. COL has helped develop a ten-year business and marketing plan for open and distance learning (ODL). A workshop on *Programme Design for Online/Blended Learning* was conducted in June 2018. This was followed in October 2018 by a four-week virtual training course on *Online Course Development* and an in-person workshop to finalise online courses and develop facilitation techniques in October–November 2018.

TEACHER EDUCATION

The Teacher Education initiative works with partner institutions to improve teacher quality and achieve better learning outcomes for students. Through the Teacher Futures model, it works with governments, teacher education institutions, schools and other partners to deliver quality learning opportunities through in-service, technology-enabled teacher professional development.

Following an agreement signed with Gulu University regarding a school-based teacher mentorship programme in Northern Uganda, COL supported a project initiation workshop for Teacher Futures – Uganda in November 2019. It was attended by 11 participants drawn from Gulu University and Muni University. The aim of the workshop was to support the development of programme content and explore technologies for collaborative learning among teachers in the region. Baseline survey tools were adapted and shared.

VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY FOR SMALL STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH (VUSSC)

Initiated by ministers of education of developing small states of the Commonwealth, VUSSC supports the collaborative development and sharing of OER to promote learning for sustainable development. As part of a tripartite Commonwealth initiative with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the University of the West Indies Open Campus, VUSSC has repurposed and made available online certificate, diploma and undergraduate degree programmes in Youth Work Development to universities that are members of the Commonwealth Higher Education Consortium for Youth Work. Makerere University is a member of the Consortium. COL's Education Specialist: VUSSC facilitated sessions on institutional readiness and the Transnational Qualifications Framework at the *Technical Workshop* hosted by the partners in London, UK in June 2018.

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR FARMERS (L3F)

L3F is a proven approach that aims to establish ICT/ODL-based systems for continuous learning among marginalised farming communities, particularly women, leading to sustainable livelihoods and empowerment. The model embodies a holistic approach to human resource development that integrates social capital, financial capital and human capital to implement a self-sustaining and self-replicating development process.

In Uganda, COL has been working with Makerere University to implement L3F. The programme was started in 2009 in southwest Uganda and has now spread across the country, with over 20,000 participants registered on the m-Omulimisa learning platform, enabling them to access quality learning resources on various aspects of agriculture at no cost. An external evaluation of the L3F programme in central and northern Uganda was commissioned in 2019 to assess its impact on the productivity, income and livelihoods of the L3F participants compared to a control group. The study confirmed earlier evaluations of the approach that found it improves livelihoods. Current efforts working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries are geared towards creating policy space and an enabling environment for the L3F approach to flourish through establishing an enabling framework.

The L3F team in Uganda has engaged with the Uganda Parliamentarians Forum on Food Security, Population and Development to discuss legislative initiatives and policies for enhancing food and nutrition security.

On 17 April 2018, COL's partner, Makerere University, briefed the country's MPs on the L3F model. The dialogue with the parliamentarians was organised to address the roles and harmonisation of legislative initiatives and policies with respect to enhancing food and nutrition security. It was part of the Food and Agriculture Organization's support for the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security, which aims to strengthen the capacities of parliamentarians in Africa to better legislate on food and nutrition security.

In line with the Certified Public Accountants of Uganda's mandate of offering continuous professional education to ensure that its members keep up to date with developments in the profession, a presentation was made on "Building a Robust Agricultural Sector Using the L3F Approach" at the 7th Economic Forum, held at the Imperial Resort Beach Hotel in Entebbe on 17 July 2019.

TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING (TEL)

This initiative aims to encourage more institutions to integrate TEL and OER policies and practices to improve teaching and learning for skills development. TEL activities focus on the individual, institutional and country levels.

In Uganda, COL supports the Uganda Management Institute (UMI) to implement TEL. In the framework of this collaboration, COL has organised a series of workshops. The objective of the March 2018 workshop was to assist UMI teachers/facilitators to explore the features of the Moodle learning management system (LMS) for blended learning. Another workshop, organised in September 2018, focused on developing blended online courses. Using Moodle, teachers at UMI started developing blended courses for the January 2019 semester offering. COL also supported UMI to set up an open access repository using DSpace, to complement the LMS. COL further supported UMI to strengthen its TEL implementation by organising a workshop on *Blended Learning and Online Facilitation* in November 2019, which was attended by 27 faculty members from various departments.

COL is also supporting Kampabits, an organisation focused on skilling underprivileged youths in ICT and multimedia, to improve their livelihoods through the ICT for Youth Employability project. Kampabits had initially selected 95 youths from the suburban areas of Kampala to train them in advanced ICT skills, life skills, and entrepreneurship training, and to provide job and personal counselling. In the framework of the project,

a placement fair was held in November 2018, with about 20 employers meeting and interacting with the young people involved in the project. Since then, 74 project participants have either received a job or started their own enterprise as a result of the six months of training. An independent evaluation of the project in terms of social return on investment showed that every dollar spent on this project resulted in 3.48 dollars of value. Kampabits is currently providing training to a new youth cohort (45 males and 45 females), including two persons with disabilities.

As well, Makerere University's College of Education and External Studies (CEES) implemented COL's Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action (C-DELTA) through a series of workshops in March 2019. Sixty teachers from various departments of CEES received training at the Centre for Teaching and Learning Support. Participants learned how to use the C-DELTA platform so they can serve as champions of digital education skills among fellow teachers as well as students.

During a trip to Uganda in September 2018, COL's Education Specialist: eLearning visited UMI to review the progress of TEL implementation at the institution. He visited Kampabits to review the progress of the ICT for Youth Employability project and made an exploratory visit to CEES.

Representatives from Uganda participated in two meetings with a TEL focus, hosted by COL in New Delhi, India in December 2018. Ms Resty Kamywa Mwogeza from UMI participated in the Technology-Enabled Learning Community of Practice Meeting, while Dr David Kabugo from Makerere University attended the *C-DELTA Training of Trainers Workshop*.

Under the aegis of TEL, COL has been offering a MOOC on *Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning*, in partnership with Athabasca University, Canada. A total of 62 learners from Uganda benefited from the third and fourth course offerings, in 2018–2019.



Events and Special Activities

REGIONAL MEETING OF COL FOCAL POINTS

The Africa and Mediterranean regional meeting of COL's Focal Points took place on 24–25 September 2018 in Gaborone, Botswana to strengthen the effectiveness of COL's work in addressing key priorities for education and training in the region and to share information about developments related to learning for sustainable development.

SADC-CDE WORKSHOP ON OPEN SCHOOLING MODEL

Hosted by Botswana Open University, the Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) promotes training and development in ODL and increases the provision of quality distance education in southern Africa. In May 2019, SADC-CDE hosted a workshop in Kigali, Rwanda to sensitise participants to open schooling and introduce COL's Open and Innovative Schooling model. Participants hailed from Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

MOOC ON INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS

The two offerings of COL's MOOC on *Introduction to Sustainable Development in Business*, which was organised in collaboration with the Open University of Mauritius in May–June 2019 and November–December 2019, attracted 26 participants from Uganda.

PCF9

Close to 550 policy makers, practitioners and thought leaders from across the Commonwealth and beyond gathered at the historic Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh, Scotland for the ninth Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF9), themed *Innovations for Quality Education and Lifelong Learning*. It was organised from 9 to 12 September 2019 in partnership with The Open University, UK.

The four days of insightful keynote addresses, engaging plenary panels, informative parallel sessions, and other programme highlights provided a unique opportunity to bridge traditional divides between borders and sectors. Discussions centred around

four key sub-themes: *Opening Up Education*, *Equity and Inclusion*, *Technology and Employability*, and delegates appreciated the focus on new forum features — artificial intelligence, youth and girls’ education and learners with special abilities. Under the auspices of PCF9, COL hosted a ministerial roundtable with participation from six education ministers.

COL sponsored nine delegates from Uganda to attend the forum. Two delegates from Uganda attended an L3F workshop, three participated in the TEL Partners meeting, and one participated in the *Teacher Education* workshop — all hosted by COL in Edinburgh ahead of PCF9.





PCF9 Edinburgh Statement

Forum *partners* from over 60 countries believe that it is possible to significantly accelerate progress towards the aim and targets of SDG4 by prioritising the following collective actions now:

1. **Accomplishment at scale**

Mobilise an emergency response to ensure that all children in the Commonwealth, including girls, learners with different abilities, and learners from vulnerable and marginalised communities, experience a quality education focused on accomplishment, knowledge exchange and the continued ability to learn.

2. **Skills for productive lives**

Urgently create learning opportunities for marginalised, excluded, vulnerable and out-of-school young people to build skills for leading a productive life, embracing technology to enhance employability, entrepreneurship and confidence, and bridging accessible formal, non-formal and informal education.

3. **Creating new digital dividends**

Develop new, innovative, flexible modes of education to foster creativity, imagination and peer knowledge exchange, increase reach and ensure no one is left behind, through the use of appropriate media and delivery, including blended approaches to digital learning.

4. Teachers as skilled agents of change

Teachers and teacher educators are the main agents of change for quality education and can be supported to catalyse action in their schools, communities and colleges as respected professionals who model lifelong learning. To do this we propose:

Creating **alternative, flexible and technology enabled pathways into teaching** to resolve the shortage of skilled and motivated teachers;

Expanding low-cost, highly effective ways to **support school-based teacher professional development** to build change capacity and capability within regional and national educational systems.

5. Positively disrupt higher education

Support innovation for quality higher education; **strengthen the technology-enabled learning ecosystem** throughout the Commonwealth, including the scope to develop professional skills, recognition, validation and verification of experiential and prior learning through micro-credentialing and blockchain technology; expand the reach of open education for dispersed audiences; and improve barrier-free access to tertiary education.

6. Challenging assessment

Radically relook at assessment models: build a culture of assessment to support employability and micro-entrepreneurship.

Our ambition is to achieve this through:

Bold inclusive collaboration;

Bringing together the diverse groups of critical thinkers, innovators and practitioners who can collaboratively make change happen by delivering quality education and lifelong learning for all;

Making greater use of data, evidence and storytelling to galvanise political will for enabling policies and well-resourced implementation plans;

Sustaining the momentum;

Building an active network of learning, support and action starting now.

Sustaining and building our momentum for change, we aim to bring our key commitments to the fore of the policy agenda through the Conference of Commonwealth



New Publications and Resources

In 2018–2020, COL produced a number of publications and resources, including:

***Knowledge Series: Designing and Implementing Micro-Credentials:
A Guide for Practitioners***

As online learning and MOOCs become mainstream, it is important to explore new forms of credentialing. This publication offers a step-by-step guide to plan, design and implement micro-credentials and badges in diverse contexts and provides greater flexibility in the journey of the new learner-earner through a skills and capability framework.

A Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development: SECONDARY

This toolkit is for implementing school-based teacher development as a way to improve the performance of schools and raise the achievement of children. This valuable resource includes a detailed framework, which can be adapted to the context of a particular country, region, district or school, and offers practical daily activities for teachers.

Guidelines on the Development of Open Educational Resources Policies

This new publication provides specific tools to analyse current contexts and policy environments, understand issues related to copyright and licensing, and align policy in support of Sustainable Development Goal 4. The guidelines present a systematic process for designing and implementing OER policies and measuring their impact.

A Guide to Integrating Employability in Higher Education Institutions: The Commonwealth of Learning's Employability Model

This publication provides clear guidelines on how to integrate employability pathways into instructional systems. From career counselling to career support, the guide demonstrates how institutions can prepare graduates for employment or entrepreneurship.

Gender Scorecard 2.0: Instructions and Templates

This is a tool to audit the capacity of institutions to mainstream gender. It helps with analysing existing policies and practices and developing clear steps for the effective promotion of gender equity.

All COL publications can be found on its open-access repository at oasis.col.org.



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