COL IN THE COMMONWEALTH
2009 – 2012
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is proud of its strong country focus. While COL works in two programme sectors Education and Livelihoods and Health which cover the whole Commonwealth, it also considers itself accountable for its work in each Member State. *COL in the Commonwealth* reviews COL’s work over the last three years (2009-2012) and captures what we have done in each country.

Following wide consultations with partners, a *Country Action Plan* was developed at the beginning of the 2009-2012 triennium to guide COL’s activities in each country and ensure that they were consistent with the national priorities of the government. These reports describe the implementation of these plans. Earlier versions of these reports were presented to the foreign ministers at the CHOGM 2011 held in Perth in October 2011.

Education Ministers were enthusiastic about the previous issue of *COL in the Commonwealth* that was submitted to 17CCEM in Kuala Lumpur in 2009. At the request of Ministers these reports cover all Member States of the Commonwealth, showing not only what COL has done in the developing countries but also how its work relates to the international development priorities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The reviews are grouped under four regions: Africa (and the Mediterranean), Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The reports for each group of countries begin with a short account of the regional activities which COL has promoted in 2009-2012.

Member States also value COL’s Pan-Commonwealth work, which benefits from the unifying characteristics of the Commonwealth such as a common language, similar constitutional and legal frameworks, and a shared commitment to the values of peace, democracy, equality and good government. Some of the Pan-Commonwealth activities and facilities that underpin COL’s work in the regions and countries are listed in the next section.

The production of *COL in the Commonwealth 2009-2012* has been an intense collective effort. COL’s advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to exploit fully the information contained in the numerous event reports prepared by staff as they work and travel. I express particular gratitude to Jasmine Lee, for diligently updating the country profiles that provided the raw material for these reviews, and to Karen Speirs, who brought this volume together in an impressively efficient and expeditious manner.

Professor Asha S. Kanwar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning
As a Commonwealth inter-governmental organisation, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has the mandate to operate in all 54 Member States, with a particular emphasis on 47 developing countries across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

COL’s Three-Year Plan is developed after consulting widely in the Commonwealth. It focuses specifically on the expressed needs of Member States and the imperative of progressing the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals, within the context of its own mission and mandate.

COL’s vision of “Access to Learning is the Key to Development” informs its work as it helps Member States accelerate progress towards achieving development goals. For example, COL harnesses the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to bring lifelong learning for farmers (L3F) in an effort to mitigate the challenge of poverty and food security (MDG 1). As more countries achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE), they seek to provide access to secondary education. Since existing institutions are unable to cater to this massive surge, COL initiated the Open Educational Resources for Open Schools project as a response (MDG 2). COL uses community media to promote mother and child health goals (MDGs 4 and 5) in countries such as India, Kenya and Malawi.

COL also focuses on four Education for All goals – access to primary education, gender equality, quality education, and learning and life skills for young people and adults – through teacher training, gender mainstreaming, quality assurance and skills development respectively.

The approach has been to work within the framework of the COL Logic Model 2009-12 but to also be flexible and responsive enough to cater to new and specific needs as they occur.

COL develops Country Action Plans for Member States based on discussions with country Focal Points and partners. These dynamic documents are updated regularly and incorporate requests from countries over the course of the triennium. They are presented as Country Reports, which document COL’s work in each country, to the Commonwealth Education Ministers, when they meet at the triennial CCEMs.

A number of COL activities span the Commonwealth. This section outlines these pan-Commonwealth initiatives.
EDUCATION

Open Schooling

COL’s “OER for Open Schools” initiative involved working with partners at open schools in six countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Seychelles, Trinidad & Tobago and Zambia) to create open educational resources (OER) for 20 secondary level courses. The OER were officially launched in March 2012 and are freely available for download, adaptation and use, resulting in a substantial contribution to open schooling globally. COL provided extensive training to “Master Teachers” in each country, helping them build their skills in developing OER in both print and eLearning versions. “OER for Open Schools” was funded in part by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

COL supports the expansion of ODL to meet the growing need for primary and secondary education, as well as lifelong learning. As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA), which involves partners from every region of the Commonwealth. Twenty-two partners signed the COMOSA constitution.

The COMOSA website was launched at the first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010, and COMOSA’s activities for the next three years were identified as Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010, and a Research Agenda with ten areas was adopted.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks. Copies of the Toolkits were made available to the delegates at PCF6.

Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries the COMOSA attended annual general meeting (AGM) in Seychelles in February 2012. Prior to the AGM, an eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop was held for COMOSA members. Participants learned about organisational eLearning capacity and how to use the eMM tool. COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. Participants drafted a “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” at the workshop. The COMOSA Steering Committee meeting was also held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012 and a launch of the OER for Open School materials was held on 2 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy.

Teacher Education

The UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative mainstreamed “child first” concepts, principles and models into the pre-service and in-service teacher education curricula in eight Commonwealth countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sri Lanka Swaziland and Zambia). COL worked with partner teacher training institutions to develop CFS learning materials and to provide capacity building workshops.

A Consultative Meeting, the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in selected Commonwealth countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands), was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers, using ODL strategies.

Higher Education

COL provides leadership in quality in ODL. COL’s quality microsite (www.col.org/qualityMS) provides a single convenient online access point to quality assurance resources in ODL. This includes access to COL’s
Quality Assurance Toolkits for open schools, higher education, teacher education and non-formal education.

The COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) provides higher education institutions with a “do-it-yourself” approach to institutional quality audits. COL developed COL RIM as a cost-effective approach that focuses on self-assessment and helps institutions improve internal quality assurance, planning and systematic institutional improvement. The COL RIM package, consisting of a conceptual framework and handbook, is freely available from COL.

COL’s Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Administration programme is designed for part-time study by busy working professionals, in response to the growing demands for post-graduate level education in business and public administration. The CEMBA/MPA programme is offered at partner institutions in Bangladesh, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka.

COL’s Graduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting builds professional skills through ODL. The programme is currently offered by three partner institutions: the National Open University of Nigeria, the University of the South Pacific in Vanuatu and Athabasca University in Canada. Indira Gandhi National Open University, India and the University of Derby, UK have been licensed to offer the programme.

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

VUSSC is a network of 32 small states of the Commonwealth dedicated to expanding access to tertiary education. VUSSC hosted international training and materials development workshops that develop capacity and initiate the development of new courses that are available as OER. Educators and learners can freely access, adapt and re-use VUSSC learning materials.

Originally led by COL, VUSSC is now governed by a Management Committee with representation from all regions of the Commonwealth.

VUSSC members collaborated to develop the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF), a system of accreditation for VUSSC courses that facilitates the movement of courses and learners among states. Through the TQF, VUSSC aims to ensure all open educational resources (OER) created for VUSSC can be adapted into recognised courses that students can take for credit through educational institutions in small states. The TQF was formally launched in South Africa and Namibia in May 2010.

VUSSC’s learning portal, launched in 2011, includes an online Learning Management System for learners and educators to access and contribute to VUSSC courses, as well as free online materials and tips for learning online.

**LIVELIHOODS AND HEALTH**

**Learning for Farmers**

COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme helps rural communities engage in appropriate technology-based open and distance education to improve their livelihoods. While governments face challenges in funding adequate agricultural extension, globalisation is creating increasing competition for poor rural farmers.

Lifelong Learning for Farmers addresses these issues by enabling vulnerable rural women and their families to embrace learning. The programme brings together four key partners: farmers, learning institutions, mobile phone and information and communication technology (ICT) companies and banks. As farmers gain relevant knowledge from learning institutions via mobile phones and ICT kiosks, banks provide loans to them with greater assurance.
Introduced in southern India in 2004, Lifelong Learning for Farmers has been adapted and introduced in Jamaica, Kenya, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

**Skills Development**

COL is helping technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in Africa expand flexible and blended delivery approaches. By increasing access to quality skills development for young people and adults, COL’s Flexible Skills Development (FSD) programme aims to alleviate poverty. This programme actively targets course development for people working in the informal economy. Through online training, workshops and an online Community Learning Network, COL is helping 11 key TVET institutions in six countries in strengthening capacity to develop new curriculum content to realise the benefits of educational media and technology.

COL is also working with TVET training institutions in the Pacific to develop training courses in basic trades to help meet the skills needs of small island states. COL has worked with partners in the region to develop courses in Small Business, Small Engine Maintenance, Tourism as a Business, Working with Timber and Working with Concrete, as well as Literacy for Basic Trades, which assists students with varying levels of literacy.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. Members from Ghana, Kenya, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Zambia are part of the network.

**Healthy Communities**

COL’s Healthy Communities initiative brings together groups working at the local level – media, health agencies, NGOs and community groups – to address health and development challenges through participatory learning programmes. While programmes vary according to local needs, COL’s approach remains consistent:

- Bring together local partners: most often community groups identify health information needs, health agencies provide content and community radio stations broadcast the learning programmes.

- Build capacity: this usually involves radio production skills, which expands the pool of community members who are actively engaged in the programme.

- Provide ongoing support: as programmes mature and partners change, COL helped community learning programmes adjust and continue to grow.

Recent initiatives span the Commonwealth, responding to local health needs.

In September 2011, COL hosted a meeting of Healthy Communities partners from 14 Commonwealth countries in Cape Town, South Africa. In addition to sharing best practices and mapping out future plans for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative, the partners made important connections that are already leading to greater “south-south” co-operation. The week-long Cape Town meeting focused on the use of media for non-formal learning about community health and development, particularly in resource-poor settings.

**Integrating eLearning**

“Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity” was a COL/UNESCO joint initiative that promoted the wider use of OER by expanding understanding of OER by educational decision makers and
quality assurance experts. The programme involved capacity building workshops in all regions of the Commonwealth, online discussion forums and new OER publications.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The project involved a survey of governments worldwide and six Regional Policy Forums. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress in June 2012 at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community. The Paris Declaration is a commitment to making educational resources developed with public funds freely available for re-use and re-purposing under open licences.

The Commonwealth Computer Navigators Certificate (CCNC) is an ICT literacy course based on the International Computer Driver’s Licence (ICDL) using Open Office on either a Linux or Windows platform. The high quality training materials are available from COL free of cost.

GENDER

Gender equality is a cross-cutting theme that underpins all COL’s initiatives. The advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to COL’s agenda of learning for development.

COL looks beyond the arithmetical target of gender parity (equal numbers of males and females in school) to the more challenging goal of gender equality (equality of outcomes). COL’s gender work includes providing gender resources, capacity building in ICT for women and gender research.

COL’s gender microsite (www.col.org/genderMS) provides a single convenient online access point to gender resources in ODL.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. COL develops and delivers effective training solutions in partnership with the UN and other international agencies. This contract work is performed on a fee-for-service basis with full cost recovery. Course subject matter ranges from effective communication and report writing to operational data management and debt management.

Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning

COL’s biennial Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF) is one of the world’s leading conferences on learning and global development. It brings together people representing educational institutions, governments and development agencies to explore issues related to ODL and development. More than 600 delegates from 50 countries attended PCF6 in Kerala, India in 2010. COL’s Excellence in Distance Education Awards, honouring individual and institutions contributions to ODL, are presented at PCF. COL, the Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria and the National Open University of Nigeria will co-host the Seventh Pan Commonwealth Forum (PCF7) in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2013.

Pan-Commonwealth Partnerships

COL’s work is supported by networks of Focal Points, Chairs and Advisors across the Commonwealth:

- Focal Points: individuals nominated by the Minister of Education in each country to act as COL’s primary contact.
- Honorary Advisors: eminent ODL professionals from across the Commonwealth are a valuable resource for consultations about COL’s future plans and for Member States seeking advice on ODL.
- UNESCO-COL Chairs: distinguished serving academics who serve in an honorary capacity, complementing the political and administrative role of the Focal Points and Honorary Advisors.

**COL KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES**

COL’s extensive resources, freely available through its website, include:

- *Connections* newsletter: providing news, commentary and insight about COL’s work and the broader field of ODL and development ([www.col.org/connections](http://www.col.org/connections))
- Blog: timely news and comment from COL ([www.col.org/blog](http://www.col.org/blog))
- Publications: research, books, toolkits and other publications commissioned by COL ([www.col.org/publications](http://www.col.org/publications))
- Country information: This online database provides access to information related to ODL from all Commonwealth countries ([www.col.org/CountryInfo](http://www.col.org/CountryInfo))
- Videos: reports from events and insight into COL’s work ([www.col.org/videos](http://www.col.org/videos))
- Course materials, gender microsite, quality assurance microsite, speeches and other resources ([www.col.org/resources](http://www.col.org/resources))
- Governance and financial information: including Board minutes, financial statements and the President’s quarterly reports to the Board ([www.col.org/GovInfo](http://www.col.org/GovInfo))
AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

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

BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth of Learning has activities with partners in all 21 Commonwealth nations in the Africa/Mediterranean region. While significant progress has been made in sub-Saharan Africa in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All Goals, major challenges remain. COL is applying its expertise in open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technology (ICT) to help advance learning for development in Africa.

COL works closely with all Commonwealth Africa nations through dozens of initiatives that help expand access to quality education and training using distance education and appropriate technologies.

COL’s work is supported by two regional co-operation agencies in Africa:

- The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE), located at the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL), is a regional ODL centre for Southern Africa.
- The Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL), located at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), is a regional ODL centre for West Africa.

COL’s regional work in Africa includes the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), open schooling, teacher education, quality assurance for higher education institutions, the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme, flexible skills development, community learning programmes, open educational resources (OER) and gender equality. Here are some recent regional activities; specific activities in each country are outlined in the individual Country Reports that follow.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Eight African countries are members of VUSSC, a collaborative network of 32 small states that is working to develop and share learning materials at the post-secondary level. Mauritius and Seychelles have hosted VUSSC international training and materials development workshops.

The VUSSC Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Procedures and Guideline document was officially launched on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and 3 May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia. The TQF can be downloaded from the VUSSC website.
Open Schooling

COL sponsored a workshop hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries attended the workshop. COL also co-facilitated a two-day workshop in Maputo to train educators to draft strategic plans for integrating multimedia in their open schools. The workshop was the first step in supporting Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia to develop digital content over a two-year period.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop.

Between July and December 2010, SADC-CDE facilitated ODL Policy Sensitisation and Policy Formulation training workshops in Botswana, Mauritius and Swaziland.

SADC-CDE held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. During this period, SADC-CDE enrolled eight faculty members from five SADC countries with the University of Pretoria for the Certificate in Gender.

The SADC-CDE Gender Winter School was held in Pretoria, South Africa in June 2011. Participants from Botswana, Lesotho and Tanzania attended the training.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. In conjunction with the COMOSA AGM, COL hosted an eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop and an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools where a draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared.

The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives from several participating African countries gave presentations on specific topics at the launch.

Teacher Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and COL signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 to focus on the training of head teachers and principals of schools in The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone and The Gambia. The COL-MUN Workshop for the Development of Materials for the Training of Head Teachers and School Principals was held in Ghana from March 29-April 1, 2010. A training manual for head teachers and principals in the four countries was developed.

Four African nations (The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) are taking part in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) project. The objectives are to integrate the CFS model into pre-service and in-service teacher training curricula, training of teachers and other education personnel on CFS at the universities and teacher training institutions, and to strengthen the role of Teacher Resource Centres. This has involved intensive training of “Master Teachers” and numerous in-country workshops.

The annual Partner Advisory Council Meeting of the Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium was held in Cape Coast in August 2009. The participants reviewed the programmes of TESSA and a Work Plan for 2010 was adopted.
Higher Education

COL is working with partners across Africa to improve access to quality higher education.

The COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for effective institutional quality audits has been introduced to educators from 11 African nations.

COL’s Commonwealth Executive Masters of Business Administration (CEMBA) and Masters of Public Administration (CEMPA), which offers working professionals the opportunity to study part-time through ODL, are available through Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. The National Open University of Nigeria offers COL’s Graduate Diploma in Legislative drafting, which builds capacity in planning and writing laws and policies.

RETRIDOL, in collaboration with the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS) and NOUN, conducted a Regional Workshop on Research Methodologies in Open and Distance Learning for Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions in Winneba, Ghana in November 2011.

RETRIDOL, with support from COL, organised a leadership training workshop for Female Academics and Staff in Higher Education in Nigeria in May 2012.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farmers

COL supported a workshop for African partners on integrating linkages between community banks and commercial banks in L3F in India in June 2010. The participants were trained by illiterate and semi-literate women involved in community banking and by officers of banks and financial institutions. They also visited sites and saw the actual community banking in operation and enterprises developed through community banking. Participants identified strategies for similar linkages in their own countries.

Skills Development

COL sponsored delegates from Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference which was held in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2010.

COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day ICT in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL sponsored several TVET educators to the eLearning Africa Conference.

In partnership with CAPA, COL facilitated a workshop for institutional heads from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in flexible approaches to TVET in June 2010. The workshop was hosted by the Mombasa Technical Training Institute (MMTI). Twenty representatives from technical training institutes attended the workshop.

COL is working with 11 TVET training institutes in Africa as “focal institutions” for flexible development activities. Senior staff members are participating in the online courses for policy makers and institutional managers.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Assessment on the focal institutions to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

C OL ACTIVITIES 2009-2012
COL co-facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with Principals and Champions of nine key institutions from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past year.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in November 2011 for TVET institutions from six African countries in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. Members from Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia are in the Network.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012 to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013.

COL sponsored TVET practitioners from the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia to the CAPA conference in Kenya in April 2012.

**Healthy Communities**

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Eighty-two scripts were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. The second course was on Healthy Communities. A second script writing competition was held where 128 entries were received. The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to approximately 350 radio and rural development organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Media and Training Centre for Health (MTC) hosted COL’s Healthy Communities Partners’ Workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

COL hosted an international training-of-trainers workshop in Vancouver, Canada in September/October 2009. Key national and regional partners from different Commonwealth regions advanced the three-year plan for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative (also linking it to UNESCO’s work in this area in the upcoming programme biennium, 2010-2011). Partners’ knowledge and skills in developing non-formal ODL programmes were increased through a “trainers train themselves” approach. Various approaches were reviewed and analysed, e.g. participatory content creation (India), use of drama (Jamaica, Malawi) and community ODL programmes (Jamaica, Tanzania).
Integrating eLearning

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Three of the workshops were held in Africa: in Cape Town, South Africa in April 2010, in Namibia in May 2010 and in Tanzania in May 2011.

In April 2010, COL, in collaboration with SchoolNet SA, Intel SA and Microsoft SA, hosted a seminar in Cape Town for Deans/Heads of Education from SADC countries on the integration of ICT in teacher pre-service education. It was attended by four representatives from the Department of Education (basic and higher); 18 deans/representatives from South African higher education institutions; 10 from SADC institutions and 14 representing national and international organisations related to the use of ICT in education. Two follow-up workshops were held by SchoolNet SA and Microsoft in August and October 2010.

Educators from a number of higher education institutions in Africa attended COL’s OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, implemented a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012.

GENDER

Gender equality is a cross-cutting corporate goal for COL. The advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment are central to COL’s agenda of Learning for Development. COL is working to ensure it is a model organisation that mainstreams gender in all its processes and at all levels. COL’s Gender micro-site provides Commonwealth countries with a one-stop, comprehensive platform to access print and electronic resources on gender and ODL with a special emphasis on ICT.

COL is leading several gender initiatives in Africa:

- COL led the development of the Gender-Class Empowerment Index, which is based on political, economic, psychological and entrepreneurial characteristic. Studies are being conducted with this Index in Kenya and Uganda to assess levels of empowerment.
- COL conducted a women and technology workshop for the Southern African Development Community.
- A study on women’s participation in ODL was commissioned by COL in partnership with teacher training institutions in Nigeria and Sierra Leone.
- A gender group has been established in COL’s online Community Learning Network, which supports flexible approaches to TVET in Africa.

REGIONAL PRESENCE

COL maintains strong relationships with many stakeholders in Africa, including member governments, partner institutions, donors and individuals. COL’s Honorary Advisors, a network of eminent ODL professionals, includes two representatives from Africa: Professor Veronica McKay of UNISA and Professor Tolly S.A. Mbwette, Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania.

The region is also represented by three COL Chairs (Professor Mbwette, Professor Vincent Tenebe, Vice Chancellor of NOUN, Nigeria and Dr. Fred Msiska of Mzuzu University in Malawi) and a network of
individuals, selected by member Governments, who liaise directly with COL as Focal Points. COL creates specific country action plans and country reports to ensure the region’s needs are addressed.

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius from 10-21 May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. The key issues identified at the Africa and the Mediterranean Focal Points Meeting were:

- Quality assurance,
- National policies,
- Promoting indigenous knowledge, and
- Women’s rights.

REGIONAL BROCHURES

COL has regional brochures that summarise its activities in each of the four regions of the Commonwealth. These can be found on COL’s website at www.col.org/regional.
BOTSWANA

COL Focal Point: Dr. Godson Gatsha, Southern African Development Community - Centre for Distance Education

BACKGROUND

Botswana is a nation in Southern Africa with a population of about two million. A valued COL partner, Botswana hosts the South African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) at the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL). The Centre promotes capacity building and research in the sub-region.

SUMMARY

Botswana is an active participant in several of COL’s major initiatives including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), Child-Friendly Schools and “Open Educational Resources (OER) for Open Schools”.

Botswana was well represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6). The Francistown College of Technical & Vocational Education received an Excellence in Distance Education Award at PCF6.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Botswana is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

Dr. Stanslaus Modesto of BOCODOL attended a VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in Singapore in February 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop in Lesotho. Dr. Modesto also attended the Lesotho workshop in March 2011 where participants developed a Bachelor’s degree in Business and Entrepreneurship.
The Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore in November 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011. Mmabaledi Seelesto (Team Leader from Botswana) attended the meeting and workshop.

Jane Dikinya of BOCODOL attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012.

Kago Monare of BOCODOL participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online instruction course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Abel Modungwa of the Botswana Training Authority attended the meeting.

Dr. Stanley Modesto of BOCODOL offered his book on “Communication and Study Skills for Distance Education Students as an OER” for publication on the VUSSC website.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Daniel Tau of BOCODOL attended the meeting and training.

Open Schooling

Botswana is one of six countries taking part in COL’s “OER for Open Schools (OER4OS)” initiative. Botswana hosted the Steering Committee Meeting in Gaborone in September 2009. The meeting focussed on the progress to date and made necessary adjustments and forward-looking strategies to ensure that outcomes would be fully achieved on time. Country Management Committees were established and have been meeting on a regular basis. Evelyn Nonyongo and Maria Madiope are country consultants for OER4OS.

Regular communications with the teams are taking place via Basecamp with consultants providing online support.

Three workshops were held in-country, of which the third workshop on print-based courses was held from 31 May-4 June 2010. Course materials for a secondary-level Geography course developed by Botswana team members were edited and uploaded to Moodle.

Lekopanye Tladi and Kago Monare of BOCODOL attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Twenty-two partners, including Fancy Amey of BOCODOL signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi on November 21, 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Fancy Amey of BOCODOL and Dr. Godson Gatsha of SADE-CDE attended the AGM.
The COL workshop on Copyright and OER was held in Delhi in November 2009. Fancy Amey of BOCODOL and participants from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

SADC-CDE held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. The delegates included DEASA members from Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

During this period, SADC-CDE enrolled eight faculty members from five SADC countries with the University of Pretoria for the Certificate in Gender, and 14 faculty members from four SADC countries at the BOCODOL for the Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) course, developed by COL.

Between July and December 2010, Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Policy Sensitisation and Policy Formulation Training Workshops, facilitated by SADC-CDE, were held in Botswana, Mauritius and Swaziland.

The SADC-CDE Gender Winter School was held in Pretoria, South Africa in June 2011. Participants from Botswana, Lesotho and Tanzania attended the training.

A workshop on Integrating Vocational and General or Academic Education was held in Botswana in July 2011. Victor Maika, Masego Bagopi, Tebo G. Ditshweu, Lechani Goitsemang, Michael Thebe, Lazarus Selebatso, Dr. Bogadi-Nage Sibande, Dr. Dikeme Kgamanyame and Jane Dikinya of Botswana attended the workshop.

COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Mabel Bothasitse and Dikeme Kgamanyame of BOCODOL attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 in Namibia. It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Botswana was represented by Dr. Godson Gatsha of SADC-CDE, Lechani Goitsemang and Mabel Bothasitse of BOCODOL.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during PCF6 in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

SADC-CDE arranged a workshop on online Learner Support in South Africa in November 2010.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with ten areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Fancy Amey of BOCODOL and Dr. Godson Gatsha of SADE-CDE attended the workshop.

BOCODOL participated in three COMOSA research projects:
- Research Study on Online Learning Success Variations/Factors
- Integrating Vocational and Academic Education, and
- Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a Gender-Sensitive ICT Strategy for Open Schooling Workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Lekopanye Tladi of BOCODOL attended the workshop.
COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Dr. Daniel Tau, Fancy Amy and Masego Bagopi of BOCODOL attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. Dr. Tau of BOCODOL reported that schools used the BOCODOL content to support learners during the recent teachers’ strike. The OER will be introduced at a Head Masters’ conference in Botswana later in 2012. Members have also agreed to write a book on the “OER for Open Schools” experience for 2012/2013.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, Masego Bagopi of BOCODOL gave a presentation on “Developing our Capacity as a BOCODOL team, a staff member’s perspective” at the launch. Dr. Tau, Masego Bagopi and Fancy Amy of BOCODOL attended the workshop and launch.

**Teacher Education**

Botswana is participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. Seezeni Tshweneyame of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Teacher Training and Development is the representative of Botswana for the CFS project. Partners include the Department of Teacher Training in the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, UNICEF Gaborone and BOCODOL.

The following CFS workshops have been held in Botswana:

- Standards refinement workshop, Mahalapye, April 2010.
- In-service and pre-service curriculum and standards review and validation workshop, Francistown, April 2010. More than 100 teacher educators from Colleges of Education, Principal Education Officers and Deputy Principals attended the workshop.
- Sensitisation workshop for teacher educators, August 2010. Seventy-five participants from 10 districts representing Teacher Resource Centres, Ministry of Education and teacher educators attended the workshop.
- CFS Preconference Workshop, Kochi, India, November 2010. Seenzeni Tshweneyame of the Department of Teacher Training and Development at the Ministry of Education and Skills Development and Altlaearlang K. Pitso of Mochudi In-service Centre attended the workshop.
- Seven Training of Teachers workshops for regional In-service coordinators, heads of education centres, education officers, school heads and principals, December 2010 to February 2011 in Central, Chobe, Kgalagadi, Kgatleng/South East, North West/North East and Gants. More than 320 participants were trained.
- Training of Teachers workshop for pre-service teacher educators, March 2011. Forty-three participants were trained.

**CFS Materials**

- The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the final draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used.
- A Curriculum review report and a set of CFS standards and indicators for Teacher Education were completed.
- The draft manuals for teacher resource centre/in-service and teacher educators were completed.
All the activities in the CFS workplan were completed.

**Higher Education**

Alison Schmidt of Quality Works (Pty) Ltd. attended the COL Review and Improvement Method (COL-RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day ICT in TVET pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL sponsored Joanna Collymore, Department of Technical & Vocational Education & Training (Hairdressing & Beauty Therapy) to the eLearning Africa Conference.

**Healthy Communities**

In May 2010, Patience Maware from the Ministry of Agriculture in Botswana completed a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring. She was also selected as a tutor for the 10-week script writing course on healthy communities that took place in August 2010.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. G.B. Molelu, Sedisa Gomotsegang of the University of Botswana, Dr. Felix R. O’Mara and Phetolo Setlhare of the Tertiary Education Council and Helen B. Kupe attended the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Dr. Daniel Tau of BOCODOL attended the workshop.

COL, in collaboration with SchoolNet SA, Intel and Microsoft, hosted a seminar for Deans/Heads of Education from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries on the integration of ICT in teacher pre-service education. Professor Richard Tabulawa of the University of Botswana attended the seminar in April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa.

Boingotlo Alice Moses of BOCODOL attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. Daniel Tau of BOCODOL and Ted Thebenala of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.
Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Fancy Amey, Masego Bagopi, Lechani Goitsemang, Dr. Daniel Tau, Stanley Modesto of BOCODOL; Joanna Collmore, A.K. Pitso and S. Tshweneyame of the Ministry of Education; Gangappa Kuruba of the University of Botswana and Dr. Godson Gatsha, COL Focal Point, of SADE-CDE.

Francistown College of Technical & Vocational Education was presented the Award of Excellence for Distance Education for Materials for its paper on the Botswana Technical Education Programme Certificate Course – The Human Body.

Dr. Godson Gatsha, Focal Point for Botswana, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- One learner participated in the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Botswana for 2012-2015 are:

- Continued support through the SADC-CDE,
- Inviting ODL practitioners to participate in its activities regionally and internationally,
- Assisting with capacity building in providing basic education to out-of-school children, youth and adults,
- Training technical and vocational teachers to become ODL practitioners, and
- Capacity building in skills development, entrepreneurship for the improvement of livelihoods through agricultural education initiatives and health education promotion through ODL.
CAMEROON

COL Focal Points: Professor Ivo Leke Tambo, Ministry of Secondary Education and Dr. Daniel Akume Akume, (Ministry of Higher Education Focal Point for COL)

BACKGROUND

Cameroon is an African nation of about 20 million people. Known for its geological and cultural diversity, Cameroon is home to more than 200 linguistic groups.

Professor Ajaga Nji of the University of Dschang in Cameroon is an Honorary COL Advisor.

SUMMARY

COL worked with partners in Cameroon to develop a national policy in open and distance learning (ODL), which is pending approval. Cameroon is involved in the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) and several community learning initiatives focused on health. A number of staff with international organisations in Cameroon are participating in COL eLearning programmes.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Professor Leke Tambo of the Ministry of Secondary Education was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

The COL workshop on copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Professor Leke Tambo and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop. Michael Mukontso of Cameroon attended a workshop on Integrating Vocational Education with Academic Education in Commonwealth Countries in Botswana in July 2011.

COL engaged William January of Namibia to design and develop a Curriculum Framework to be introduced in the Cameroon National Open School (CAMNOS). The CAMNOS Curriculum Design Workshop was held in April 2010. More than 30 people from the Ministry of Secondary Education, Ministry of Basic Education and Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training attended the workshop. The workshop report was submitted to Professor Tambo.
Higher Education

A National ODL Policy Framework developed by COL has been approved by four Education Ministries.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

COL launched a community learning initiative in partnership with Cameroon Link in November 2010. A programme development workshop organised by Cameroon Link in Menji, Lebialem District involved 26 participants from 20 organisations and government departments including the Azi District Hospital, Azi Development Organisation, Lebialem Community Radio, Sub Divisional Delegation of Women’s Empowerment and Family, Menji Council. The workshop resulted in the design of a community learning programme on maternal and child health that addressed 24 key health issues over a 52-week period. Forty-five episodes were broadcast on Lebialem Community Radio, complemented by face-to-face learner support.

A participatory evaluation and planning workshop held in Lebialem in September 2011 brought together 16 representatives of local stakeholder groups, including the district hospital, deputy mayor’s office, the community radio and various government departments, e.g. women’s empowerment office. A one-week follow-up programme design workshop was held in Lebialem in March 2012 for 17 local media, health and community development workers resulting in a second series of programmes on maternal and child health. Participants were also engaged in distance mentoring immediately following the workshop.

In May 2010, three female participants from Cameroon attended a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring. One was selected as a tutor for the script writing course on healthy communities that took place in August 2010.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Six people from Cameroon completed the course. A script writing competition was held where 82 scripts, including three from Cameroon, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. Nine participants from Cameroon took part in the second course about promoting healthy communities. A second script writing competition drew 128 entries.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to approximately 350 radio broadcasters and media production groups across Sub-Saharan Africa.

James Achanyi-Fontem of Cameroon Link attended COL’s Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.
OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops. Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including James Achanyi-Fontem of Cameroon Link.

Dr. Daniel Akume Akume, Focal Point for Cameroon, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius from 19-21 May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- One learner took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
- One learner took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Cameroon for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing the capacity and skills of ODL tutors in the teaching and learning process,
- Finalising a national ODL policy,
- Following up on dual mode provision at the universities where this already exists and expansion to dual-mode provision elsewhere,
- Establishing a national body to manage distance education, and
- Setting up a National Open University, as well as open schools.
BACKGROUND

Cyprus is an island nation in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is a small state of the Commonwealth, with a population of approximately 870,000. Cyprus has contributed to COL’s budget since 2006.

SUMMARY

Cyprus is a participant in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). The COL Focal Point for Cyprus, Professor George Papadopoulos, attended COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in 2010 and the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in March 2011.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Cyprus is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth who are actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to “translate in practice” the implementation of the TQF for VUSSC based on the plan developed by the TQF Management Committee.
The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held from Nov. 22-23, 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Professor George Papadopoulos of the University of Cyprus attended the meetings in Kuala Lumpur and Kochi.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Professor George Padadopoulos of the University of Cyprus and COL Focal Point.

Professor George Papadopoulos, Focal Point for Cyprus, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Cyprus for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing courses and policies to further strengthen the link between vocational training and lifelong learning, and the needs of the labour market,
- Sharing experiences and best practices among participating countries, with emphasis on the development of digital and Internet connected schools,
- Further development and application of Qualification Frameworks and the establishment of a National Agency for Qualification Assurance and Accreditation,
- Further development of educational material, policies and infrastructure for open and distance learning, e-Learning, informal learning and post-secondary education programmes, and
- Training stakeholders on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and innovative technologies to enable them to further train people and produce material (train the trainers).
THE GAMBIA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Musa Touray, Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology

BACKGROUND

The Gambia is a nation of about 1.7 million people in West Africa. A small state of the Commonwealth, The Gambia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

The Gambia is an active member of the Virtual Universities for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). COL has been working in the area of Teacher Education with the University of The Gambia and The Gambia College. The Gambia Technical Training Institute is COL’s partner for the skills development initiative.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

The Gambia is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

A team leaders meeting, in preparation for the Apia, Samoa workshop was held in Vancouver in October 2009. Philip Grey Johnson from The Gambia was one of five team leaders who attended the meeting and drafted a framework for the workshop.

A VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. Phillip Grey (Team Leader) and Lamin Touray of the Gambia Ports Authority attended the workshop.
VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Musa Touray attended the meeting.

**Teacher Education**

Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and COL signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 to focus on the training of head teachers and principals of schools in The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The COL-MUN Workshop for the Development of Materials for the Training of Head Teachers and School Principals was held in Ghana from March 29-April 1, 2010. Ida Njie and M. Jeng of the Ministry of Basic Secondary Education and Lamin Jarjou of The Gambia College attended the workshop. A training manual for head teachers and principals in the four countries was developed.

Training of the Master Trainers from The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone was held in Banjul from November 29-December 3, 2010.

In conjunction with the Faculty of Education at the University of The Gambia, COL organised an Instructional Design workshop in Banjul in January 2011. The purpose of the workshop was to identify the key elements of instructional design that could be applied to the development of distance learning materials. Twenty-eight people from the University and the Colleges of Education attended the workshop.

**Higher Education**

COL facilitated a Quality Assurance Framework Validation workshop in Banjul in February 2012. Twenty-six Gambians from educational institutions attended the workshop.

The Research and Training Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL), in collaboration with CENDLOS and NOUN, conducted a regional workshop on Research Methodologies in Open and Distance Learning for Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions in the West African Sub-region in Winneba, Ghana in November 2011. Aminata Njie of The Gambia attended the workshop.

RETRIDOL, with support from COL, organised two Leadership Training Workshops for Female Academics and Staff in Higher Education in West Africa Sub-Region in Nigeria in May 2011 and May 2012. One participant from The Gambia attended the workshop in 2011.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL organised a Flexible Skills Development Workshop at the National Open University of Nigeria in September 2010. The objective of the workshop was to introduce flexible and blended approaches into skills development activity. Fatou Mbye and Edward Mansal of Gambia Technical Training Institute, Banjul attended the workshop.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, Gambia Technical Training Institute has been identified as one of the 11 focal institutions for Flexible Skills Development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build the capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible
and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and on online community of practice. 32 people from Gambia Technical Training Institute have participated in the various capacity building activities.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an ICT Infrastructure Assessment for 10 institutions including GTTI to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in November 2011 in the development of audio and video learning materials for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for TVET institutions from six African countries. Ya Awa Njie and Edward Ceasar Mansal of GTTI attended the workshop. Ya Awa Njie’s lecture on Electricity Conductivity and Laboratory Safety was voted by the participants as one of the two Best Overall Audio Recordings.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012 to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Abdoulie Loum and Edward Mansal of The Gambia TTI attended the meeting.

COL sponsored Abdoulie Loum and Edward Mansal of The Gambia TTI to the CAPA Conference in Kenya on 28 April 2012.

Healthy Communities

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills supported by COL were developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first online course focused on smallholder agricultural innovation. One Gambian completed the course. The second course was on Healthy Communities; another Gambian completed the course.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Musa Touray of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research Science and Technology.

Mr. Touray attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.
Six learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by The Gambia for 2012-2015 are:

- Capacity building at the University of The Gambia to support the Bachelor of Education programme.
- Capacity building with The Gambia College in developing ODL curriculum, modules and support materials.
- Training Gambian youths in basic fisheries skills.
- Training of trainers on the use of traditional birth attendance and village health workers, and training key personnel in public health management and implementation.
GHANA

COL Focal Point: Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah

BACKGROUND

Ghana is a West African nation with a population of about 24 million. Ghana is involved with open and distance learning (ODL) and COL on many levels, and is a contributor to COL’s budget.

Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr of Ghana is the Regional Representative for Africa on COL’s Board of Governors. He is also a member of the Executive Committee and Performance Committee of the Board.

SUMMARY

COL works with institutions in Ghana in almost all of its initiatives including open schooling, teacher development, higher education, skills development, healthy communities, integrating eLearning and eLearning for International Organisations.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Abena Agyakoma Kwarteng of the President’s Special Initiative on Distance Learning was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years will include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Joshua Mallet of the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS) attended the AGM.

On behalf of CENDLOS, COL contracted a consultant, Ed du Vivier of Lesotho, to do a desktop review of published literature, government reports and internal documents. The consultancy included a 10-day visit to Ghana in November 2010 to meet with key stakeholders. The report outlining strategies for CENDLOS was submitted to the Minister of Education in February 2011.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Abena Agyakoma Kwarteng of the President’s Special Initiative on Distance Learning, Ghana and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.
Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS attended a workshop on Integrating Vocational and General or Academic Education in Botswana in July 2011.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL), Namibia. This is the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Ghana was represented by Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS and Francis Donkor of the University of Education, Winneba.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with ten areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS attended the meeting.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Joshua Mallet attended the workshop and launch.

COL facilitated two workshops for CENDLOS in Accra on 12 March 2012. The first workshop on Management of Open Schools was held in March 2012. Twenty-one stakeholders and staff of CENDLOS, Ghana Prisons Service, Achimota School, St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary High School, PRESEC – Legon, Armed Forces Senior High Technical School, UK Institute of Physics – Ghana, Science Education Unit, Wesley Grammar School and Micap Institute of Technology attended the workshop. The training focused on:

- Recommendations from the Study “Sustainable Open Schooling for Ghana”,
- Acquiring, developing and distributing study material,
- Recruiting and supporting learners, and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

The second workshop for the constituent CENDLOS Board was held on 14 March 2012. The focus of the training was on:

- Term of office and conditions of service of members of Board,
- Meetings and decisions of CENDLOS,
- Board rules,
- Committees of the Board, and
- Draft CENDLOS bill.

COL attended the launch of CENDLOS on 15 March 2012. In attendance were 44 people from educational institutions, CENDLOS, the Ministry of Education and the media.

Teacher Education

The annual Partner Advisory Council Meeting of the TESSA Consortium was held in Cape Coast in August 2009. The University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba presented their progress reports. The participants reviewed the programmes and the Work Plan for 2010 was adopted.
Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and COL signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 to focus on the training of head teachers and principals of schools in The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The COL-MUN Workshop for the Development of Materials for the Training of Head Teachers and School Principals was held in Ghana in March/April 2010. Simeon Obotan Labri, Metro Director of Education, Dr. Yaw Ankomah of the University of Cape Coast; Cosmos Kwame Dzikunu, Dr. Pajedo and Professor Kofi Mereku of the University of Education, Winneba; and Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah, COL Focal Point attended the workshop. A training manual for head teachers and principals in the four countries was developed.

The training of the Master Trainers from The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone was held in Banjul in November/December 2010.

Higher Education

Professor Samuel Agyei-Mensah of the University of Ghana, Edward Badu of KNUST and Adwoa Sey of AAU attended the COL Review and Improvement Method (COL-RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009.

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme is offered by the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology (KNUST), Ghana.

A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September/October 2009, for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants including Professor Edward Badu and Dr. Collins of KNUST participated in the workshop.

The Academic Board (AB) and the Executive Governing Board (EGB) met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Dr. C.K. Osei and Professor K. Obiri-Danso of KNUST attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively. Professor I.K. Dontwi and Rev. (Dr.) William Owusu Boateng of KNUST are members of the Academic Board and Professor Wiliiam Otoo Ellis is a member of Executive Governing Board.

Henry K. Mensah and Eric Fosu Oteng-Abayie of KNUST attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November-1 December 2011.

COL facilitated an eLearning and Open Content Development Workshop in May 2011 at the Koforidua Polytechnic, Ghana. This workshop was jointly organised by the Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL) and CENDLOS. Thirty-three educators from higher education institutions attended the three-day workshop.

Kafui Prebbie of Tech Aide, Impact Education, Ghana was the Facilitator at a three-day workshop on eLearning initiatives and sustainability in Sierra Leone Education at the University of Sierra Leone Freetown in June 2011. The workshop was organised by RETRIDOL, with support from COL.

RETRIDOL, in collaboration with CENDLOS and NOUN, conducted a Regional Workshop on Research Methodologies in Open and Distance Learning for Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions in the West African sub-region in Winneba, Ghana in November 2011. Sixteen Ghanaians from educational institutions attended the workshop.

COL facilitated an ODL workshop in November 2011 at the Accra Technical College to deliberate upon and prepare a draft policy for ODL in Ghana. Twenty-one delegates from 14 Ghanaian institutions and the Ministry of Education attended the workshop.
RETRIDOL, with support from COL, organised the Leadership Training Workshop for Female Academics and Staff in Higher Education in the West Africa sub-region in Nigeria in May 2012. One participant from Ghana attended the workshop.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL supported a workshop for Distance Learning Centre coordinators to build capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in learner support systems in May 2010. This was done in partnership with MICAP Institute of Technology in Winneba.

COL organised a Flexible Skills Development Workshop in NTI, Nigeria in September 2010. The objective of the workshop was to introduce flexible and blended approaches into skills development activity. Mary B. Agyepong and Ms. Patricia Ghann of the Koforidua Polytechnic; ING Seth T. K. Dzokoto and Dr. Samuel Addo of HO Polytechnic attended the workshop.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, Koforidua Polytechnic has been identified as one of the 11 focal institutions for Flexible Skills Development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build the capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and on online community of practice. 108 people from Koforidua Polytechnic have participated in the various capacity building activities.

COL sponsored Patricia Ghann of Koforidua Polytechnic to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference in November/December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. She also attended the COL organised Flexible Skills Development Workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the CAPA Conference to provide an opportunity for interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development programme and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Assessment on ten institutions including Koforidua Polytechnic to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011, and the institution has rationalised their campus ICT infrastructure as a result.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Assessment on ten institutions including Koforidua Polytechnic to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011, and the institution has rationalised their campus ICT infrastructure as a result.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Elizabeth Turkson of Accra Polytechnic attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with Principals and Champions of nine key institutions from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past one year. George Afeti of the Ministry of Education, Professor Reynolds Okai and Mary Agyepong of Koforidua Polytechnic attended the meeting.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in November 2011 for TVET institutions from six African countries in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET. Ebenezer Koufie and Joyce Quaye of Koforidua Polytechnic attended the workshop. Ebenezer Koufie’s video on the introductory topic in thermodynamics and the use of all concepts and techniques taught in the workshop was voted the Best Overall Video by the participants.
The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are nine members from Ghana.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012 to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Professor Reynolds Okai and Mary Agyepong of Koforidua Polytechnic attended the meeting.

COL sponsored Professor Reynolds Okai and Mary Agyepong of Koforidua Polytechnic to the CAPA Conference in Kenya on from 1-3 May 2012.

Healthy Communities

In May 2010, four Ghanaians participated in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Twenty-four people from Ghana completed the course. A script writing competition was held where 82 scripts, including 11 from Ghana, were received on the subject of smallholder farmer innovation. Lydia Ajono from the Ghana Community Radio Network won the award for the best entry by a community radio broadcaster for her script about “A woman farmer who grows henna plants and sells them for processing into dyes and cosmetics”.

Gabriel Adukpo’s entry on “A farmer suffocates stem borers to death and saves his cocoa farm” and Rosemone Ohene’s script on “A farmer protects his young oil palm seedlings from rodents with jatropha” are two of the top 15 winners.

The second scriptwriting course was on community health; 13 people from Ghana completed the course. A second script writing competition drew 128 entries. Gabriel Adukpo’s entry on “A family fights malnutrition with local leafy vegetables” was one of the winners.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Integrating eLearning

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Nadia Tagoe of KNUST attended the workshop.

Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah and Sally Essuman of the University of Education, Winneba and Yaw Oheneba-Sakyi of the University of Ghana attended the OER Workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. Salome O. Essuman and Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS attended the Forum. This
resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Mary Agyepong of Koforidua Polytechnic, Ebenezer Koomson of Ghana Health Service, Joshua Mallet of CENDLOS and Albert A. Saah of KNUST.

Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah, Focal Point for Ghana, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2010,
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2012.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Ghana for 2012-2015 are:

- Open schooling,
- Upgrading of pupil teachers in basic schools,
- Agricultural enterprises training programme,
- Community health nursing training through distance learning,
- Dual mode at Koforidua Polytechnic, and
- Sanitation in the market place with mobile technology programme.
BACKGROUND

Kenya is a country in East Africa with a population of about 40 million people. The Government of Kenya introduced free primary education in 2003; secondary education is now well subsidised. The country has a long-standing commitment to open and distance learning (ODL) and to COL. Kenya is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

COL is working with Kenyan partners in most areas of its work including teacher development, skills development, Lifelong Learning for Farmers, healthy communities and integrating eLearning. COL is supporting Kenya’s plan to establish an open university.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

COL sponsored an eLearning and Content Development training workshop in Nakuru, Kenya in April 2012. The participants were trained in the basic computer skills using select software, acquired skills to search and use OER, and gained an understanding of online teaching and learning in a virtual learning environment (Moodle) and use of various Web 2.0 technologies. Twenty-four people from the Network for Non-Formal Educational Institutions (N-NFEI), St. Michael Holy Unity, Orion Digital Media, ByGrace Schools, Hope World Wide Kenya, Bumust Schools, Mustard Seed School, Busara Academy and Positive Women Action Group attended the workshop.

COL supported the Content Adaptation Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2012. The workshop was organised by N-NFEI. The participants used the COL website to adapt Form 1 content relevant in Chemistry, English, Biology and Physics to the Kenyan Secondary Syllabus. Other open source sites were also used to adapt Kiswahili, Geography, History and Government Business Education to the Syllabus. Representatives from N-NFEI, Egerton University and the Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

Teacher Education

The annual Partner Advisory Council Meeting of the Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium was held in Cape Coast in August 2009. Egerton University, Kenya presented its progress
report at the meeting. The participants reviewed the programmes of TESSA and the Work Plan for 2010 was adopted.

A COL writers’ workshop on the open educational resources for English Language Teaching (ORELT) was held in Accra in August 2009. The commissioned writers of the OER reviewed the draft modules and the writers were trained in COL’s ODL template and Basecamp. Two consultants from Kenya participated in the workshop.

The development of multi-media content materials for the Open Resources for English Language Teaching (ORELT) project was completed in Nairobi during 2010-2011. The six modules of the multi-media are now available on the ORELT portal (http://orelt.col.org/) and will be piloted in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone after the Training-of-Trainers workshop in July 2012.

The offline evaluation of ORELT modules was completed in Nairobi in March 2012. The piloting of the modules in Kenya is being coordinated by the Department of Languages Arts, University of Nairobi with support from Futuristic Ltd. Nairobi and is scheduled for completion in September 2012. Two hundred teachers in rural and urban schools will be initially targeted.

**Higher Education**

COL sponsored Ombajo M. Edward of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa to the Cambridge International Conference on Open Distance and e-Learning in September 2011.

COL sponsored Robert Alfred Okinda of the Kenya Technical Teachers College to study the Master of Instructional Design and Technology online programme offered by the Open University of Malaysia.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Learning for Farming**

The Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative was launched in Western Kenya with three non-governmental organisations (NGOs), a university, an international organisation and a leading Kenyan bank participating as partners.

A capacity building programme for three non-governmental organisations was organised by the Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) during 2009 on Open and Distance Learning for Development. Multimedia materials on sorghum are being used for building the capacities of the farmers in Kakamega district.

The Equity Bank and Krep Bank have started advancing credit to the rural communities under L3F. One group of women has constructed green houses for producing vegetables.

A workshop, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation was organised in Nairobi, Kenya for the L3F participants during 2010. The modalities for integrating climate change issues at farm level operations in L3F were identified. Participants represented Ikonzo Musanda Self Help Group, Ugunja Community Resources Centre (UCRC) and Kenya AIDS Prevention Project Group.

COL supported a workshop for African partners on integrating linkages between community banks and commercial banks in L3F in India in June 2010. The participants were trained by illiterate and semi-literate women involved in community banking and by officers of banks and financial institutions. They also visited sites and saw the actual community banking in operation and enterprises developed through community banking. Participants identified strategies for similar linkages in their own countries.
Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and Ugunja Community Resource Centre (UCRC) have arrived at an understanding for establishing the Sweet Potato Farmers Innovation Platform under L3F. UCRC has started a community banking concept called “Table Banking” covering 800 women members. Kenya AIDS Prevention Project Group has entered into a one-year partnership agreement with Mumias Outgrowers Savings and Credit Bank. The L3F participants, mostly women, received the first set of credit of Ksh 1.25 million for poultry and other agricultural enterprises from the bank.

An ODL-based capacity building of 600 men and women in poultry, cassava, business planning and credit management took place in Mumiaiz and Ugunja in October and December 2010.

A three-member team from Kenya (Charles Ogada, James Onyango, and Francis Anyona) who are involved in the L3F initiative attended pre-conference meetings and the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010.

Ikonza Musandra Self Help Group (IMSHG) has started mobile phone-based learning for 400 community bank members through wireless application protocol (WAP) enabled phones.

COL has launched a course on poultry with a blend of indigenous knowledge and frontier science.

In collaboration with the University of British Columbia (UBC), COL has developed a Learning Management System called LIVES (Learning through Interactive Voice Educational Systems). The goal is to provide communities with a learning tool based on voice mails using mobile phones. COL will be able to scale up its interventions because more than a thousand learners can be reached through this system, which can provide automated feedback and can be used to transmit voicemails in any language or dialect. The system will be activated in Kenya with mobile phone companies.

Three handbooks in ODL format for orange flesh sweet potato cultivation, indigenous poultry management, and savings and lending schemes have been completed.

Four hundred people, mainly women, have been brought into savings and credit groups through L3F mode. About 1,500 people are involved in various forms of ODL such as mobile phone-based ODL and multimedia-based ODL. KARI conducted training programmes for 25 farmers who have become the resource persons for developing ODL materials in local languages and dialects.

An assessment by partners shows that the income of the women farmers has improved by 20% due to L3F.

In February 2012, COL visited the villages around Mumiaiz, Busia, Uganja and Kakamenga and met with L3F participants most of whom are HIV-positive women. There are indications that the learning, credit and social capital have helped to enhance the household food security with better nutritional status, which could help in addressing the HIV-AIDS challenges. Dr. Rosemary Atieno of Kenya Institute of Development Studies (KIDS) is conducting a study among the L3F participants to understand the outcomes and impacts.

COL facilitated a workshop Kenya in in February 2012 to discuss COL’s Three Year Plan. Representatives from the Kenya Aids Intervention & Prevention Project Group (KAIPPG), the Ugunja Community Resource Centre (UCRC), the Seed Saving and Credit Cooperative Society (SACCO), UCRC and Ikonzo Musanda Self Help Group attended the workshop. Fanuel Odhiambo, Commissioner of the Ministry of Cooperative Development &Marketing and Dr. Rosemary Atieno of KIDS participated in the workshop. The Ministry of Cooperative Development & Marketing has shown its interest in scaling up L3F in the cooperative sector, particularly among SACCO. A concept note has been developed in consultation with Ministry of Cooperative Development & Marketing to strengthen the human resource development activities in the cooperative sector with the help of Open and Distance Learning.
Skills Development

COL funded a workshop, organised by the African Medical & Research Foundation (AMREF) in Meru, Kenya in March 2010 to support capacity building in distance education and OER for nurse educators and the development of degree level nurse training OER. COL sponsored Bernadette N. Canute of Kenya to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference on Entrepreneurial Polytechnic which was held in Abuja, Nigeria in April 26-29, 2010.

COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day information and communication technology (ICT) in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL sponsored Dr. R. Maithya of Kenya Technical Teachers’ College (KTTC) to the eLearning Africa Conference.

In partnership with CAPA, COL facilitated a workshop for institutional heads from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in flexible approaches to TVET in June 2010. The workshop was hosted by the Mombasa Technical Training Institute (MTTI). Twenty representatives from technical training institutes attended the workshop.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, KTTC, MTTI, Masai Technical Training Institute, Coast Institute of Technology and Thika Technical Training Institute have been selected to join 11 key institutions for COL’s flexible development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build the capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and an online community of practice.

Robert Okinda, Charles Gichuhi and Yona Okidia of KTTC worked with a COL consultant and colleagues from the Technical and Vocational Teachers College (TVTC) in Zambia to develop materials for ICT in TVET teaching.

COL organised the Flexible Skills Development Workshop in December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the CAPA conference to provide an opportunity for the interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions. Representatives from seven technical training institutes in Kenya attended the workshop.

COL sponsored Anne K. Kithinji of MTTI, Dorcas Kathenya and Rose Kiiru of Thika Technical Training Institute (TTTI) to CAPA from 30 November-3 December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an ICT Infrastructure Assessment on ten institutions including Mombasa Technical Training Institute, Coast Institute of Technology, Masai Technical Training Institute and Kenya Technical Teachers College to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

COL conducted a three-day workshop on strengthening the capacity of teachers in instructional design for ODL methods in TVET at Mombasa Technical Training Institute (MTTI) in May 2011. Twenty-one teachers from MTTI and the Coast Institute of Technology attended the workshop.

COL organised the two-day Instructional Design Workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute in May 2011 for 15 teachers from the Institute.

COL facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011.
COL facilitated a workshop in May 2011 with key Kenyan partner institutions and national policy stakeholders to map out the policy implications of offering distance and eLearning programmes in TIVET.

COL co-facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with Principals and Champions of nine key institutions from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past year. Antony Macharia and Josephine Kyal of MTTI, John Mwawaza and Anthony Wanjala of the Coast Institute of Technology, Abdi Adan and Francis Wambua of Masai TTI and Rose Kiru of Thika Technical Training Institute attended the meeting.

COL contracted Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to facilitate a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute in November 2011, for TVET institutions from six African countries in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET. Fourteen people from five Kenyan technical training institutes attended the workshop.

Anthony Wanjala’s video to be used in a tourism class identifying bird species within Masai Land was voted the Most Creative and Innovative Video by the participants. Freda Murugi’s video on the Hospitality Management with students participating in setting up a table and utensils for visitors in a hotel setting was tie for the Best Overall Audio Recording.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are 160 members from Kenya in the Network.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2012, to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Representatives from Coast Institute of Technology, Masai TTI, Thika Technical Training Institute and Kenya Technical Teachers College and Kenya Coast Polytechnic attended the meeting.

COL sponsored John Mwawaza and Anthony Wanjala of Coast Institute of Technology; Abdi Adan and Francis Wambua of Masai TTI; Rose Kiiru and Kariuki Jefferson Ndichu of Thika Technical Training Institute; and Yona Okidia and Margaret Muga of Kenya Technical Teachers College to the CAPA Conference in Kenya from 1st to 3rd May 2012.

Healthy Communities

A community learning programme about HIV/AIDS targeting 1,000 households was designed and implemented in Kibwezi district. Fifty community health workers and 10 representatives from local community-based organisations, community media, district health authorities and the African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF) were trained in two workshops on non-formal ODL skills.

The process resulted in Imanye, Wivange (Know your status, Take control), a community learning programme about HIV/AIDS developed in Kibwezi District with the District Health Office, AMRED, Sikizana Trust, Radio Mang’elele and Mang’elele Community Integrated Development Programme. More than 50 episodes of Imanye, Wivange have been aired on Radio Mang’elele with learner support provided by community health workers.

COL and the Kenya Community Media Network (KCOMNET) also collaborated in building capacities to increase the volume and quality of non-formal learning opportunities available in Rarieda District in Western Kenya, working with Sauti FM and a group of local development stakeholders. A programme development process was run, centred on a one-week design workshop. Six community development/health and media workers (nine women, six youth) were trained in programme development and content creation
skills. They designed a new series of programmes on community health – *Ngima Kitug’go* (Don’t joke with your health).

Njuki Githethwa from the Kenya Community Media Network Rupantar participated in the Healthy Community partners’ workshop to review and plan COL’s programming, held immediately prior to PCF6 in Kochi in November 2011, and also participated in PCF6.

Njuki Githethwa also attended the international training-of-trainers workshop (Vancouver, September/October 2009). Key national and regional partners from different Commonwealth regions advanced the three-year plan for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative (also linking it to UNESCO’s work in this area in the upcoming programme biennium, 2010-2011).

In May 2010, three Kenyan representatives participated in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring. One was selected as a tutor for the script writing course on healthy communities that took place in August 2010.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Twelve Kenyans completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including eight from Kenya, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. John Cheburet, a journalist from The Organic Farmer, a magazine and a radio show aired on the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, won first prize on smaller farmer innovation. Rosemary Nyaoile-Kowuor from Shine FM, Kenya received the Marie Coulibaly Award for the top entry by a woman for her script on “sack farming”. Stanley Nyakwan Ongwe’s entry on “Women re-invent hanging gardens technology to solve land crisis” and Fredrick Mariwa’s script on “A local farmer in Kenya uses water hyacinth to produce chicken feed” were two of the top 15 winners.

The second course was on Healthy Communities; 17 Kenyans completed the course. A second script writing competition was held where 128 entries were received. The winners included two Kenyans: Simon Mukali’s entry on “Talking to teens about unsafe sex”, and Charles Kemboli’s entry on “Empowerment saves youth from drug abuse”.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to approximately 350 radio and rural development organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Cleopa Otieno, National Coordinator, Kenya Telecentre Network and Community Learning Coordinator for Telecentre.org, participated in training on Freedom Fone, an interactive voice response application, in Dar es Salaam in May 2011.

Patrick Ochieng of the Kenya Community Media Network (KCOMNET) attended COL’s Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

In November 2011, COL supported KCOMNET in conjunction with the regional office of Farm Radio International (Arusha, Tanzania), to run a three-day workshop on integrating mobile telephony into community learning and other educational programmes in Nairobi. The 30 participants included...
representatives from community radio stations, community development organisations and the mobile software/services development community.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of open and educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Florence Lenga and Joyce M. Mutinda of the Commission for Higher Education, Kenya attended the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011. Mildred Ayere of Masen University and M. Benson Irumgu attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. Kilemi Mwiria of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and Catherine Ngugi of OER Africa attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

Catherine Ngugi of OER Africa in Kenya was commissioned to draft the UNESCO-COL Guidelines for OER for Higher Education and is also a member of the COL-UNESCO Expert Group.

A TVET instructional design workshop was held in Luanshya, Zambia in April 2011. Ten participants from Coast Institute of Technology, Kenya Technical Teachers College (KTTC), Masai Technical Training Institute, Mombasa Technical Training Institute and Thika Technical Training Institute attended the workshop.

Priscillah Amburo of Narok University College, Doris Kaige of Kyambogo University, and F. Kerora and Joseph Wamutitu of Egerton University attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Abdulkadir Ali Abdurahman, Mursal Bashir Hassan of Mombasa Technical Training Institute; Gabriel Angule of iEARN; Francis Anyonah of Ikon-o Musanda Self-Help Group; Njuki Githethwa of Kenya Community Media Network; J.M. Muzera of Coast Institute of Technology, Kenya; Charles Ogada of Ugunjai Community Resource Centre; Yona Okidia of Kenya Technical Training College; Francis Anyona of Ikonza Musandra Self Help Group and James Onyango of Kenya AIDS Intervention Prevention Project Group.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Omido Ongonga, Focal Point for Kenya, was invited to the meeting.

COL sponsored James Onyango, Executive Director of Kenya Aids Intervention Prevention Project Group (KAIPPG) to attend the Commonwealth Peoples’ Forum, held in Perth, Australia in October 2011. KAIPPG is a key partner in COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers activity.
eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world and substantial number of participants from Kenya participated in various courses:

- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- One learner took the International Development Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- One learner took the UN Office of Internal Oversight Service (OIOS) Writing Audit Reports course in 2009,
- Four learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2010,
- One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Seven learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
- Six learners took the OIOS Writing Audit Reports course in 2011,
- Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
- Twelve learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2011.

Jason Kamweru, a Debt Management Advisor from Kenya, is engaged as a COL e-tutor providing one-on-one tutoring via Moodle for the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System eLearning programme.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Kenya for 2012-2015 are:

- Increasing teacher recruitment and training to meet the challenge of universal primary education,
- Increasing participation in adult and continuing education and non-formal education,
- Increasing access to tertiary education, and
- Supporting the development of an information and communication technology (ICT) literate workforce.
LESOTHO

COL Focal Point: Dr. H.M. Lephoto, Institute of Extra-Mural Studies (IEMS), National University of Lesotho

BACKGROUND

A Commonwealth small state with a largely rural population of about two million, Lesotho faces distinct challenges in economic development and education. The country has become a strong COL partner and has contributed to COL’s budget since 2006.

SUMMARY

The Right Honourable Prime Minister of Lesotho, Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, and the First Lady visited COL in September 2009. The very senior delegation included the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Mphu Ramatlapeng, and the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Mohlabi Kenneth Tsekoa.

COL’s then President Sir John Daniel attended the National Day Celebrations in Lesotho on 11 March 2011 and had lunch with His Majesty King Letsie III, The Right Honourable Prime Minister and First Lady, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Health and Social Welfare and other Ministers.

Lesotho is an active participant in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and hosted a three-week training and materials development workshop in March 2011. Lesotho is also a member of COMOSA, and COL is working in open schooling, teacher education and skills development with partners in the country.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology,
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Lesotho is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.
The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in information and communication technology (ICT) and content development as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Letsie Mohatonyane and Dr. Mamolete Mohapi of the National University of Lesotho attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Motsoene S. Molapo of the National University of Lesotho, Faculty of Agriculture attended the workshop.

Waynes K. Lofafa and Monica Makara also attended the 9th VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in Singapore in February 2011, to prepare and train the team leaders for the workshop in Lesotho.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho from March 7-25, 2011. The workshop was organised by the National University of Lesotho and COL. Waynes K. Lofafa, Monica Makara, and K. Hlasa of the National University of Lesotho; Mphanya Tsui of the Lesotho Agricultural College, David Lephoto of IEMS, Nkotseng Leanya-Mphutlane of the Lesotho College of Education; Malitheba Metsing of the Lerotholi Polytechnic and Rapelang Sekatle of Limkonkwing University of Creative Technology attended the workshop.

Rev. Isaiah M. Makheta and Dr. Mamolete Mohapi of Lesotho attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Dr. Mamolete Mohapi attended the VUSSC Management Committee in Seychelles in March 2012.

Thabiso Kenneth Saba of the National University of Lesotho participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth. Dr. Mamolete Mohapi of Lesotho is a representative for Africa/ Mediterranean.

The 2nd VUSSC Management Committee Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The Committee reviewed the progress to-date and drafted the Plan for the next year. The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held from Nov. 22-23, 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Dr. Mamolete Mohapi attended both meetings.

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Vincent Seutloali of the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.
COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. This was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Lesotho was represented by Mankabi Rantekoa and Monaheng Mohale of the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during PCF6 in Kochi in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to the COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

The Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

Lesotho is one of six countries that took part in COL’s “OER for Open Schools” initiative. Lesotho attended the Steering Committee Meeting in Gaborone in September 2009. The meeting focussed on the progress to date, and made necessary adjustments and forward-looking strategies to ensure that outcomes would be fully achieved on time.

Regular communications with the teams were conducted via Basecamp with consultants providing online support.

The Country Management Committees met on a regular basis. Peter Fenrich and Ed Du Vivier were the Lesotho Country Consultants.

Three workshops were held in-country, of which the third was held in July 2010. Lesotho’s materials for English, Maths and Science were edited and Science has been uploaded on Moodle.

Sekelekele Heqoa and Mamocheta Makara of Lesotho College of Education attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Vincent Seutloali of the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) Gender Winter School was held in Pretoria, South Africa in June 2011. Participants from Botswana, Lesotho and Tanzania attended the training.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Vincent Seutloali of the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. Members have also agreed to write a book on the experience for 2012/2013.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, Vincent Seutloali gave a presentation on “Supporting the faculty members from LDTC who participated in the OER4OS, a management perspective”. Vincent Seutloali also attended the workshop, Steering Committee meeting and the launch.
Teacher Education

Lesotho is one of the eight countries participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The Contribution Agreement was signed by the Lesotho College of Education (LCE). The CFS Project Point People in Lesotho are:

- Dr. John Oliphant, Rector, LCE
- Dr. Koebu Khalema, Director of Academic Planning, Research and Consultancy, Lesotho College of Education
- Nurbek Teleshaliyev, Education Specialist, UNICEF Lesotho.

The partners in Lesotho include the Ministry of Education and Training, UNICEF Lesotho, Lesotho College of Education and the National University of Lesotho.

A baseline study was conducted to identify CFS gaps in teacher education curricula and teacher educators’ CFS knowledge and skills. It constituted the basis for developing supplementary training materials on mainstreaming CFS.

Meetings were held in April-July 2010 to develop monitoring and evaluation tools (CFS standards and Indicators) and critique/finalise the baseline study and the curriculum analysis in preparation for the development of supplementary training materials and the Training of Teachers (ToT) workshops. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the project was also finalised during these meetings. Eighty-five teacher educators and other education personnel participated in these meetings.

The following CFS workshops have been held in Lesotho:

- Sensitisation workshop for teacher educators on CFS, June 2010. Fifty-three participants from the LCE, National University of Lesotho and the Ministry of Education and Training Special Education Unit attended the workshop.
- A CFS Workshop was held in Kochi, India in November 2010. Koebu Khalema, Dr. Michael Nkhopoti of the Lesotho College of Education and Lati Makara Letšela of UNICEF Lesotho attended the workshop.
- Three Training of Teachers (ToT) workshops for teacher educators were held in February and March 2011; 115 participants were trained.
- One ToT workshop for in-service educators was held in February/March 2011; 21 participants were trained.
- A curriculum review workshop (23 participants) and a series of meetings were held from March-April 2011.
- Materials Development Workshop, April 2011. Teacher educators at the Lesotho College of Education and the National University of Lesotho (Faculty of Education) attended.

The CFS Handbook has been completed and is being used for subsequent training workshops for pre-service and in-service teachers.

CFS Materials

- The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the Final Draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used.
- The draft manual for teacher educators (with material/handbook for in-service/inspectors) were finalised.
- The materials/manuals development, pilot testing, final revision and production and printing of materials were completed.
Higher Education

Malerato Kaimu of the Ministry of Education & Training attended the COL Review and Improvement Method (COL RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009.

The COL RIM implementation is taking place at the National University of Lesotho.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL organised a Flexible Skills Development Workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho during the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) Conference to provide an opportunity for interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Six participants from Lerotholi Polytechnic attended the workshop.

Healthy Communities

COL and UNESCO Windhoek collaborated to support organisational and capacity development in Mafeteng, the site of Lesotho’s first licensed community broadcaster. Working with the Lesotho National Commission for UNESCO and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Lesotho, COL supported a capacity building process, run by the Media and Training Centre for Health (South Africa). It included three elements:

- A three-day study tour in January 2012, for three staff and board members of Mafeteng Multimedia Association and a representative of the UNESCO National Commission. They visited two communities in South Africa (Free State and Upington) to meet with community broadcasters (Qwa Qwa and Riverside) and their stakeholder partners in the public and civil society sectors.
- Twenty local Mafeteng community stakeholders and policy representatives engaged in three days of organisational development work in February 2012, related to community broadcasting. This resulted in an updated business plan for the media centre.
- An online mentoring programme following the face-to-face workshop in February.

Two individuals from Mafeteng also participated in a COL-sponsored one-week training run by the Media and Training Centre for Health in Cape Town, South Africa in April 2012. The focus of the training was on media production and broadcasting skills, with a view to running educational and development programming for social impact.

Integrating eLearning

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011. Vincent S. Seutloali of Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre attended the workshop.

COL organised a two-day workshop on the use of ICT for Teaching and Learning at the School of Technology and Innovation, Newtown Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2011. Matselande B.P. Khaahloe, Dr. Mabataung V.L. Khati, Neo Sehalahala and Kasongo Kalanda of the Lesotho College of Education attended the workshop.

CQL ACTIVITIES 2009-2012
OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Professor Mamolete Mohapi of the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies; Koebu Khalema, Michael Nkhoboti, Marathabile Khanyane, Dr. Matselane Khaahloe of the Lesotho College of Education; and Bothephana Makhakhane of the National University of Lesotho.

Dr. H.M. Lephoto, Focal Point for Lesotho attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- One learner took the WHO Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Lesotho for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing both print and online materials for practitioners at all levels,
- Developing more flexible approaches to skills development,
- Use of mobile phones to improve livelihoods in the areas of health, farming and tourism,
- Promoting human resource development in business and entrepreneurship at the tertiary level, and
- Researching on teacher education capacity building.
MALAWI

BACKGROUND

With a largely rural population of about 15 million, Malawi is a landlocked country in southeast Africa. Malawi’s commitment to open and distance learning (ODL) dates back to 1965, when the Malawi College of Distance Education was established. The country faces a growing demand for education through distance learning.

Dr. Fred Msiska of Mzuzu University is a COL Chair. Ms. Bethel S. Masauli, the former Acting Principal of the Malawi College of Distance Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2011.

SUMMARY

COL’s work on healthy communities in Michinji district has been very successful. COL also works with partners in Malawi in teacher development (including the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools initiative), open schooling, skills development and integrating eLearning.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. The delegates included Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA) members from Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Masauko Nkolokosa of the Malawi College of Distance Education attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Malawi was represented by Esther Maulidi Bwino and Steve Chizeze Chagunda of the Malawi College of Distance Education.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA) to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.
Higher Education

COL sponsored Mackenzie Chilambo of Mzuzu University to a conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL sponsored Marjorie M. Phiri of Malawi to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference on Entrepreneurial Polytechnic in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2010.

COL organised the Flexible Skills Development Workshop on November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the CAPA conference to provide an opportunity for the interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions. Esther Phiri of the University of Malawi, Zizwa Msukuma of the Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training Authority and Godfrey Kafere of the Ministry of Education attended the workshop. COL sponsored Esther Phiri of the University of Malawi to the CAPA conference.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. John Bisika, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science & Technology; Chakufwa Mkandawire of Salima Technical College; Fanny Nkunika of TEVETA; Marjorie Phiri and Owen Mutega of Staff Development Institute and Abaca Fordfrey of UCC Soroti attended the workshop.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are five members from Malawi.

Healthy Communities

Since April 2009, COL has provided support to MaiMwana Trust (Mchinji District) for Phukusi la Moyo, a community learning programme on maternal and child health that combines weekly radio programmes with learner support in the form of group discussions.

Following a programme design process in April-June 2009, mentoring on programme delivery skills training workshop was provided through December 2009. Sixty radio episodes were broadcast between May 2009 and September 2010. The programme has some 3,000 active learners and as many as 10,000 passive listeners in Mchinji district.

A second programme development workshop was held in Mchinji in March 2012, facilitated by Malawian development communication specialists Charles Simbi and Gladson Makowa. This resulted in the design of a second phase of Phukusi la Moyo, including 43 weeks of programming about maternal and child health. Fourteen individuals participated from MaiMwana community health groups, MaiMwana health project, Mchinji District Hospital, Mchinji District Authority and Mudzi Wathu Community Radio.

Phukusi la Moyo was selected as a site for research and evaluation as part of COL’s TYP 2009-2012. Annual reviews of the programme were completed in October 2009, October 2010 and August 2011. The research study “Evaluating the implementation and impact of the radio programme, Phukusi La Moyo, on...
maternal and child care and care-seeking behaviour in Mchinji District, Malawi” was submitted to the National Health Sciences Research Committee in July 2011.

Story Workshop (Malawi) participated in the Healthy Community partners’ workshop to review and plan COL’s programming, held immediately prior to PCF6 in Kochi, India in November 2011, and also participated in the COL-UNESCO seminar, Learning from Community Media and PCF6’s Community Development theme.

Joke van Kampen of Story Workshop attended the international training-of-trainers workshop (Vancouver, Sept/Oct-09). Key national and regional partners from different Commonwealth regions advanced the three-year plan for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative (also linking it to UNESCO’s work in this area in the upcoming programme biennium, 2010-2011). Partners’ knowledge and skills in developing non-formal ODL programming were increased through a “trainers train themselves” approach. Various approaches were reviewed and analysed, e.g. participatory content creation (India), use of drama (Jamaica, Malawi) and community ODL programmes (Jamaica, Tanzania). Strategies and tools were reviewed and plans made concerning the International Peer Group, Community Media Space on WikiEducator.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses submitting a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Six participants from Malawi completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including four from Malawi, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. Andrew Mahiyu’s entry on “Innovative farmers uses animal dung to protect his crops by fending off hungry goats” and Gladson Makowa’s script on “What fattens pigs is still a mystery” are two of the top 15 winners.

The second course was on Healthy Communities where four participants from Malawi completed the course. A second script writing competition was held, and 128 entries were received.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Story Workshop (Malawi) has been a key strategic partner in COL’s community learning programme initiative. COL contracted Story Workshop for the following activities:

- Facilitation of a community learning programme in Tanzania through a workshop integrating programme design and skills training held in November 2009.
- Preparation of a community learning programme handbook; draft was delivered in November 2009.
- Training on programme development skills in South Africa through a skills training workshop held in September 2010.
- Facilitation of a community learning programme in Lebialem, Cameroon on maternal and child health through a workshop integrating programme design and skills training held in November 2010.
- Scale up of the community learning programme Phukusi la Moyo in Malawi; ongoing through August 2011.

Joke van Kampen and Charles Simbi of Story Workshop and Florida Banda of MaiMwana Trust attended COL’s Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community...
learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Rebecca Ngalande of the University of Malawi attended the first workshop for Heads of Commonwealth Universities on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011. Fred Msiska of Mzuzu University attended the workshop.

Joyce Chitsulo of the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi (FAWEMA) attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Gladson E. Makowa of the Story Workshop Educational Trust and Joke van Kampen of Story Workshop.

Bethel Masauli, Focal Point for Malawi, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Four learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Malawi for 2012-2015 are:
• Training workshops for teachers, tutors and lecturers in ODL philosophy, management and administration, course developers, researchers in ODL,
• Establishing a learner support unit for ODL,
• Promoting eLearning in ODL institutions, and
• Improving livelihoods programmes through information dissemination on radio and television.
MALTA

COL Focal Point:  Mr. George Borg, Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family

BACKGROUND

A member of the European Union and the Commonwealth, Malta has a population of approximately 415,000. Literacy rates in the country are high; so are enrolment rates for both primary and secondary school. Malta has contributed to COL’s budget since 2008/2009.

Ms. Mary Rose Debono, the former Service Manager, Project & Initiatives in the Directorate for Educational Services at the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family, was the Focal Point for COL from 2009-2010.

SUMMARY

Malta is an active participant in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and has played an active role in ICT

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Malta is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth who are participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Joachim James Calleja of the Malta Qualifications Council, Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family was invited but could not attend the meeting. He was kept informed of its progress.
The TQF Procedures and Guideline document has been officially launched on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and 3 May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia. The TQF can be downloaded from the VUSSC website. Malta has referenced the National Qualifications Framework 2010 to the TQF.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Integrating eLearning**

ComNet, a Malta-based foundation, partnered with COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft in the ICT in Education Leadership forums in the Caribbean and the Pacific that took place in January and May 2012 respectively. Ms. Sandra Hysler was the contact person and took responsibility in organising both events.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Mr. George Borg, Focal Point for Malta attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Malta for 2012-2015 are:

- Training of teachers on the use of interactive whiteboards and eLearning,
- Training of teachers for students with disabilities,
- Training in psycho-social services,
- Sharing of ODL modules for use amongst educational institutions in Commonwealth countries, and
- Supporting the development of a national ODL policy.
MAURITIUS

COL Focal Point  Mrs. Janick Jaunbocus, Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology

BACKGROUND

An island off the southeast coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 1.3 million. Mauritius has a long history with COL dating back the very early days of COL when Sir John Daniel, who would become COL’s third President, conducted national consultancy in Mauritius. Also, the first President of COL, the late Professor James Maraj, served as Executive Director of the Mauritius Tertiary Education Commission from 1995-1997. The country is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Mr. Vishoorow Luximon, the former Acting Director at the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology was the Focal Point for COL from 2011-2012. He succeeded Mr. Ricaud Auckbur, the former Director at the same Ministry, and Mr. H.B. Dansinghani, the former Director responsible for Educational Reforms & International Matters, who were the Focal Points from 2010-2011 and 2006-2010 respectively.

SUMMARY

Mauritius is an active partner in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and has two members on the VUSSC Management Committee. Mauritius hosted COL’s Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean in March 2011. COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme is partnering with the National Productivity Competitiveness Council (NPCC) in Mauritius. COL assisted with the project report for an Open University in Mauritius and will support the establishment of the new institution.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.
Mauritius is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Harjiwan Kallee of the Mauritius Port Authority attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. Workshop participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Roshini Brizmohun of the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Protection and Security and Ting Wah Siow Woong Hung of the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU) attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. D. Sheethiah of the University of Mauritius attended the Workshop.

Ranjeet Bhagooli of the University of Mauritius attended the Materials Development and Training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012. Kaylash Allgoo participated in the VUSSC Management Committee meeting prior to the workshop.

Isswar Jheengut of the Mauritius College of the Air participated in for the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online instruction course. Kavita Purmessur of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources participated in the VUSSC LINUX online training course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth which included Ricaud Auckbur of Mauritius representing Africa/Mediterranean and Kaylash Allgoo of Mauritius, who serves as Chairperson of the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF).

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the TQF Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Kaylash Allgoo of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority attended the meeting.

The 2nd VUSSC Management Committee Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The Committee reviewed the progress to-date and drafted the plan for the next year. The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was also held in November 2010 in Kochi. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Ricaud Auckbur (member representing Africa/Mediterranean) and Kaylash Allgoo (TQF Management Committee Chair) attended both meetings.

Open Schooling

Between July and December, 2010, the Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) facilitated ODL Policy Sensitisation and Policy Formulation training workshops in Botswana, Mauritius and Swaziland.
Higher Education

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and non-Commonwealth countries took part. Sheela Thancanamootoo of the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) attended the roundtable.

COL facilitated the setting up process for the Open University through a consultancy in 2007. The Open University Bill has been passed in Parliament and awaits proclamation.

COL sponsored Amit Varma of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources to study the Master of Instructional Design on Technology online programme offered by the Open University Malaysia.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

The Ministry of Gender Equality, the Ministry of Cooperatives, the Ministry of Agriculture, two banks, two non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the proposed Open University of Mauritius joined the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) in a stakeholders’ workshop and have developed a roadmap for Lifelong Learning for Farmers initiative in Mauritius. The Ministry of Gender Equality has signed an agreement with COL’s partner, NPCC, to develop learning materials and L3F strategies among women in Mauritius for economic empowerment.

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Ministry of Agriculture, Mauritius Post and Cooperative Bank and Mauritius Commercial Bank have developed ODL materials relevant on lifelong learning for farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture has finalised a certificate course on Good Agricultural Practices and Fair Trade.

A workshop, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation, was organised in Nairobi, Kenya for the L3F participants. The modalities for integrating climate change issues at farm level operations in L3F were identified. Shalini Mathaven and Naren Sukurdeep of the National Productivity Competitiveness Council attended the workshop.

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, in collaboration with the National Productivity & Competitiveness Council and COL, officially launched the “Lifelong Learning for Women’s Empowerment” in Mauritius on 19 May 2011.

A course on Legal Literacy for Women in Creole was finalised. The course is reaching 700 women through mobile phones. The course is also available on interactive DVDs, which are being shown in 14 women’s centres, 54 social welfare centres and 101 community centres. At the end of 2011, 850 women had gone through the course.

COL facilitated a workshop in February 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss COL’s Three-Year Plan. Naren Sukurdeep, a consultant from Mauritius, attended the workshop.

COL, with the support of Mohammad Santally of the Virtual Centre for Innovative Learning Technologies (VCILT), University of Mauritius, has developed a training programme on ODL and eLearning in non-formal learning. 30 staff from the Agriculture Research and Extension Unit (AREU) and the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare have participated in the training in order to strengthen ODL-based extension.
Integrating eLearning

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. K.D.V. Putty-Rogbeer of the Tertiary Education Commission, Mauritius attended the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011. Isswar Jheengut of the Mauritius College of the Air attended.

Pritee Auckloo and Anuradha Gungadeen of the Mauritius Institute of Education attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Vicky A. Oojorah of the Mauritius Institute of Education (Centre for Open and Distance Learning) attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The overall theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four main themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL also organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Roshini Brizmohum of the Ministry of Education; Kaylash Allgoo of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority; Mohini Bali of the Government of Mauritius; Ravhee Bholah of the Mauritius Institute of Education; Mohammad Issack Santally of the University of Mauritius; Narendranath Sukurdeep of the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council; Wardah Santally; and Ricaud Auckbar of the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology and COL Focal Point.

The University of Mauritius was presented with the Award of Excellence for Distance Education for interactive, electronically delivered materials, which may be supplemented by materials developed in other media, for its paper on the Diploma in Web & Multimedia Development of the Virtual Centre for Innovative Learning.

The Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology and COL co-hosted the Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Ricaud Auckbur, Focal Point for Mauritius, attended the Regional Focal Points Meeting.

Sir John Daniel, then President and Chief Executive Officer of COL, delivered a lecture on “Tertiary Education: How Open?” at the Public Lecture organised by the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology on 20 May 2011 in Mauritius.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.
• One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
• Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
• One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
• One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL looks forward to the ongoing contribution of representatives from Mauritius who are playing important leadership roles with VUSSC. COL is committed to helping Mauritius establish its new open university. In particular, COL will assist with systems development and courseware.
MOZAMBIQUE

COL Focal Point: Ms. Zaida Paz Helena Baule, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

A southeastern African country with a population of about 22 million, most of whom rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, Mozambique faces many economic and educational challenges. A regular contributor to COL’s budget, Mozambique has worked with COL to expand access to learning for development through open and distance learning, particularly open schooling.

SUMMARY

Mozambique is an active member of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA) and has participated in several training events related to open educational resources (OER), quality assurance, integrating multimedia, and monitoring and evaluation.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Antonio D. Franque of the National Institute of Distance Education in Mozambique was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OERs was held in Delhi in November 2009. Antonio D. Franque of Mozambique and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Luis Uamusse of the Institute of Open and Distance Education (IEDA) attended the AGM.

COL co-facilitated a two-day workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010. Representatives from Tanzania, Zambia and Moises Magacelane and Benico Arminio of IDEA, Mozambique were trained to draft strategic plans for integrating multimedia in their open schools. The workshop was also the first step in supporting Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia to develop digital content over the next two years.
COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Lurdes Nakala of the National Institute of Distance Education and Amadeu Afonso of IDEA attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Lurdes Nakala of the National Institute of Distance Education and Amadeu Afonso of IDEA attended the workshop.

A Manual for the Tutors of Learning Centres in Open Schools was translated into Portuguese in 2010. The manual is for those who would like to take up the task of acting as a tutor in an educational programme following ODL methodologies.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during PCF6 in Kochi in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to the COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four areas (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating Vocational Education with Academic Education in Commonwealth Open Schools, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Luis Uamusse of IDEA attended the workshop.

The Ministries of Education and Women and Social Action participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a workshop “Gender-Sensitive Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for Open Schooling” in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Esperanca Michua and Manuel L.J. Simbine of the Ministry of Education and Maria Presentina Echeco of the Ministry of Women attended the workshop. Antonio D. Franque of the National Institute of Distance Education was the local organiser.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Mr. Antonio D. Franque of the National Institute of Distance Education attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

Benilde Nhalevilo of Forum of Community Radios attended COL’s Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

COL supported the Forum of Community Radios (FORCOM) in a national training of trainers workshop run in March 2012 for 17 master community radio trainers from across the country. COL’s support enabled
FORCOM to engage two experts from Malawi to conduct 2.5 days of training on participatory content creation and programme development.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity”. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Josphat Maforo of the Catholic University of Mozambique attended the workshop.

The sixth OER workshop was held in Maputo, Mozambique in August 2011. There were 22 participants from Mozambique representing Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, the Ministry of Education, the Institute of Open and Distance Learning and Universidade Pedagógica.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Antonio D. Franque of the National Institute of Distance Education and Remigio E. Rainde of the Ministry of Education attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

Lurdes Nakala of the National Institute of Distance Education attended the meeting on behalf of Zaida Paz Helena Baule, Focal Point for Mozambique.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Mozambique for 2012-2015 are:
- Developing and producing multimedia content for ODL programmes,
- Developing short professional courses through ODL,
- Developing supportive online materials at various levels,
- Providing scholarships in ODL, and
- Supporting the establishment of ODL for technical and vocational education and training (TVET).
NAMIBIA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Beans Ngatjizeko, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

Namibia is a large country with a population of 2.2 million. It is active in numerous open and distance learning (ODL) initiatives and is a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA). COL’s Education Specialist, Open Schooling, Frances Ferreira is a former Director of the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). Namibia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Ms. Eva-Liisa Kafidi, the former Executive Secretary of the Namibian Open Learning Network Trust (NOLNet), was the Focal Point for COL from 2009-2010.

SUMMARY

Namibia is one of the lead partners in COL’s open schooling initiative. It is a member of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) and the open educational resources (OER) for Open Schools consortium. Namibia is also active in the Virtual Universities for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and participates in COL initiatives in teacher education, skills development and integrated eLearning.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Namibia is one of 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. Neville Asser Mbai of the Polytechnic of Namibia (Namibian German Centre for Logistics) attended the workshop.
The VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in preparation for the Male workshop was held in Singapore in collaboration with the National Institute of Education at the Nanyang University of Singapore. The team leaders included Edwig Karipi of the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL).

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Edwig Karipi of NAMCOL attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Wilhelmina Louw of NAMCOL attended the workshop.

Dr. N. Kgabi of the Polytechnic of Namibia attended the Materials Development and Training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012.

Maurice Nkusi of the National Institute for Educational Development participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Course. Ismael Uiseb of the University of Namibia, Indileni Daniel, Barbara Foster, Phyllicia Marshall, Deepa Deepak, Bujan Boddie and Ave Mann-Cross of NAMCOL participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction Course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Franz Gertze of the Namibia Qualifications Authority attended the meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Beans Ngatjizeko attended the meeting.

The TQF Procedures and Guideline document was officially launched on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and 3 May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia. The TQF can be downloaded from the VUSSC website.

**Open Schooling**

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Paavo Pea of NAMCOL was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at [http://comosa.org/wordpress/](http://comosa.org/wordpress/) was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Heroldt V. Murangi and Paavo Pea of NAMCOL attended the AGM.

COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Francine Keendjele and Jan Nitschke of NAMCOL attended the workshop.
COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 in NAMCOL, Namibia. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to the COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks. A COMOSA workshop on Research in Open Schooling was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating Vocational Education with Academic Education in Commonwealth Open Schools, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Heroldt V. Murangi and Paavo Pea of NAMCOL attended the workshop. NAMCOL participated in the Research Study on Online Learning Success Variations/Factors and The Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a workshop “Gender-Sensitive ICT Strategy for Open Schooling” in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Francine Keendjele of NAMCOL attended the workshop. At the request of the Ministry of Education, Zambia, COL contracted Turning Points Consultancy CC, a Namibian company, which provided the services of Justin Ellis, to carry out an evaluation of the Zambia College of Distance Education (ZACODE).

Namibia was one of six countries that participated in COL’s “OER for Open Schools” initiative. Namibia attended the Steering Committee Meeting in Gaborone in September 2009. The meeting focused on the progress to date, and made necessary adjustments and forward-looking strategies to ensure that outcomes would be fully achieved on time.

Country Management Committees were established and met on a regular basis. Jean Duperreault was appointed the Namibia Country Consultant.

Regular communication with the teams were conducted via Basecamp with consultants providing online support.

Three workshops were held in-country of which the third workshop was held in Namibia in June 2010. All print-based units for Jr. School Certificate (JSC) English, Entrepreneurship, Life Science, Physical Science and Geography have been completed and uploaded to the Moodle platform.

Wynand Diegaardt, Wilhelmina Louw, Audrey Poulton, Saara Munguungu and Edwig Karipi of NAMCOL attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OERs was held in Delhi in November 2009. Paavo Pea of NAMCOL and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

NAMCOL with the support of COL developed a comprehensive manual on the implementation of a Multi-Media Strategy on Open Schooling which serves as a model that could be replicated in other Commonwealth countries. The manual is available on COL’s website at http://www.col.org/openSchooling

COL, Wilhelmina Louw and Wynand Diergaardt of NAMCOL, co-facilitated a two-day workshop on “The development of a Multi Media Strategy” in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010. The main resource material, used by NAMCOL was the Manual on the Implementation of a Multi-Media Strategy in Open Schooling that they had developed previously. Representatives from Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia were trained to draft strategic plans for integrating multi-media in their open schools.

Frances Ferreira, COL Education Specialist, Open Schooling gave a presentation on “Providing Equitable Access to Education through ODL” at the National Education Conference in Namibia on 27 June 2011.
COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Heroldt Murangi and Wilhelmina Louw of NAMCOL attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. Members have also agreed to write a book on the experience for 2012/2013. Heroldt Murangi attended the Steering Committee Meeting.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, Wilhelmina Louw of NAMCOL gave a presentation on, “The challenges and joys in translating the OER to the MOODLE course”. Heroldt Murangi and Wilhelmina Louw attended the workshop and launch.

Namibia launched its “OER for Open Schools” materials on 8 March 2012.

COL provided support to NAMCOL for a study on “Narrowing the Skills Gap Through Vocational Education and Training (VET)”, which was completed in February 2012.

Teacher Education

A Consultative Meeting, the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands), was held in the Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aimed to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through a programme to support teachers, using ODL strategies. Ericah Chilongo of the Namibia Institute of Educational Development, Eugenie Pienaar of Khomasdal Campus and Alfeus Dax of Namibia attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL sponsored Florida Beukes of the University of Namibia to a Conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day ICT in TVET pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL sponsored Ndeshimona Afunde of the Learner Support Unit, NAMCOL to the eLearning Africa Conference.

Dr. Delvaline Mowes, Director of Centre for Lifelong Learning, Namibia was contracted as organisational development consultant to NIEPA in Nigeria.

Healthy Communities

In co-operation with UNESCO and the Media and Training Centre for Health (South Africa), COL supported capacity building of media, health and development groups in Keetmanshoop, specifically skills in non-formal ODL programme design. Twelve media, health and development groups were involved in a
preliminary consultation, peer exchange and a training session was carried out over four days in June 2010 with inputs from Radio Riverside (Upington, South Africa).

Follow-up training, co-funded by UNESCO, was carried out in April 2011 with a focus on ODL programme development skills; 15 media, health and development groups participated.

COL provided support for a meeting on Namibia’s community radio broadcasting sector in Windhoek in August 2011, organised by UNESCO, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung-Africa, the Media Institute for Southern Africa Namibian chapter and the United States Embassy. Franklin Huizies, Board Director with both the international and Africa boards of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, provided inputs on national networking and the social impact of community media.

Manfred Isaacks of the Namibian College of Open Learning was trained in the GRINS software application in South Africa in September 2011. This software application enables the integration of mobile telephones to support interaction and user generated content in three radio stations (Atlantis, Upington and Worcester) in South Africa in September 2011.

Between March and June 2012, COL, in partnership with UNESCO Windhoek and Media and Training Centre for Health (South Africa), supported a needs assessment and feasibility study in Rehoboth for a community learning programme.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Franz Gertze of the Namibia Qualifications Authority attended the first workshop in Cape Town, South Africa in April 2010. Nine representatives from the Namibia Qualifications Authority and the UNESCO Cluster Officer Namibia attended the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010. The fifth workshop was held in May 2011 in Dar es Salaam. Heroldt Murangi of NAMCOL attended the workshop.

COL organised a two-day workshop on the use of ICT for Teaching and Learning at the School of Technology and Innovation, Newtown Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2011. Hildigonda J.M. Kruger of the National Institute for Educational Development, Irene H. Kaimu of Namibia Polytechnic and Rakel Kavena Shalyefu (Ph.D) of the Teaching and Learning Improvement Unit of the University of Namibia attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Jaco Du Toit of UNESCO Windhoek and Edwig Karipi of NAMCOL attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL supported the attendance of 12 teachers representing 12 political regions in Namibia to attend a workshop “ICT in Education in Namibia” (25 to 26 June 2012)

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

CPL ACTIVITIES 2009-2012
Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Corne Botes, Wynand Diegaardt and Francine Keendjele of NAMCOL; Ulrich Innozenz Hummel, Delvaline Lucia Mowes of the Polytechnic of Namibia and Beans Ngatjizeko of the Ministry of Education and COL Focal Point.

The Polytechnic of Namibia was presented the Excellence in Distance Education Award for Institutional Achievement.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Beans Ngatjizeko, Focal Point for Namibia, was invited to the Meeting.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Namibia for 2012-2015 are:

- Expansion of vocational education and training in order empower unemployed youth with adequate skills for self-employment,
- eSkills training for educators,
- Promoting ICT skills (mobile learning, etc.) across the entire education sector,
- Accelerating access to OER, and
- Addressing misconceptions and prejudices about ODL.
BACKGROUND

Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa, with about 155 million people. Its education and training needs exceed what existing institutions can provide. Open and distance learning (ODL) is seen as an effective means of expanding access to education and training. Nigeria has strong links with COL.

As a major donor, Nigeria has a seat on COL’s Board of Governors. His Excellency Professor Michael Omolewa was a member and Deputy Chair (July 2009-June 2010) of the COL Board and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board. He completed his term in June 2010. Her Excellency Mrs. Mariam Katagum is the current representative from Nigeria to the COL Board of Governors. She is also a member of the Audit Committee of the Board. COL’s Education Specialist for Teacher Education and Team Leader - Education, Dr. Abdurrahman Umar, is a Nigerian national who was formerly Academic Director of the National Teachers’ Institute (NTI).

Professor Vincent Ado Tenebe, Vice Chancellor of the National Open University of Nigeria, is a UNESCO/COL Chair. Dr. Marie E. Uko and Mrs. Loveth I.C. Amaku of the Federal Ministry of Education were the Focal Points for COL from 2007-2010 and 2010-2012 respectively.

SUMMARY

COL supported the establishment of the Research and Training Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL). Dedicated to building capacity in ODL for West African member states, RETRIDOL is located at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

The UNESCO-COL Chair on ODL has been conferred on NOUN. COL also works with a range of institutions and organisations in open schooling, teacher education, quality assurance, skills development, healthy communities and eLearning. Under the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools partnership, a programme on Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) is being developed for teachers from the nomadic community.
EDUCATION

Open Schooling

COL initiated and implemented a three day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 in Namibia. It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Nigeria was represented by Okoro Helen Ego of the Universal Basic Education Commission.

A workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education was held in Botswana in July 2011. Ndu U. Matthew of Nigeria attended the workshop.

Teacher Education

The annual Partner Advisory Council Meeting of the Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium was held in Cape Coast in August 2009. NTI, Nigeria presented its progress report at the meeting. The participants reviewed the programmes and the Work Plan for 2010 was adopted.

Professor Thomas Adeyanju and Professor I.A. Olaofe of Ahmadu Bello University and Dr. Musa Maisamari attended a writers’ workshop on the open educational resources (OER) for English Language Teaching (ELT) in Accra in August 2009. The writers reviewed the draft modules and uploaded the draft modules onto the COL instructional design template.

The Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador (MUN) and COL signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 to focus on the training of head teachers and principals of schools in The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The COL-MUN Workshop for the Development of Materials for the Training of Head Teachers and School Principals was held in Ghana in March/April 2010. Dr. A.C. Njoku, Dr. A.D. Shofoyeke, Dr. O.T. Omotayo of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Prince Adamelo O. Olude and Mal. Gambo Muazu of NTI attended the workshop. A training manual for head teachers and principals in the four countries was developed.

COL conducted a study on “Women’s participation in ODL programmes: A study of NTI Kaduna and FTC Sierra Leone”. COL administered questionnaires to 70 selected female students and held focus group discussions in late March 2010 with 22 selected students from the Teacher’s Certificate and HTC courses in Kaduna and Freetown.

In March/April 2010, 78 NTI participants from the six states of the North East Geological zone of the country were trained in Bauchi City on distance education tutoring using a manual developed with COL support.

Nigeria is one of eight countries participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The training of the Master Trainers from The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone was held in Banjul in November/December 2010. The CFS Project Point People in Nigeria are:

- Dr. Ademola O. Olude, NTI
- George Igelegbai, Education Specialist, UNICEF Nigeria
- Dr. Mohammad Junaid, NCCE
- Dr. Yunusa Abdulkareem, NCCE

The following CFS workshops have been held in Nigeria:

- Five resource people attended the Materials Development Workshop (to develop modules on CFS concepts and methodology to be integrated into NTI course books) in June 2010,
- Six participants attended the National Commission of Colleges for Education (NCCE) Materials Development Workshop for the development of manuals for the Teacher Resource Centres/Head Teachers and Teacher Educators in July 2010,
- Eight participants attended the Critique Workshop for In-service Manual at NCCE in August 2010. Another six attended the Critique for Pre-service/Teacher Education Manual in September 2010,
- Two Training of Teachers workshops for Teacher Educators and Head Teachers, Education Resource Centre Personnel were held at NCCE, Abuja in October 2010 with 134 participants attending,
- The CFS Preconference Workshop was held in Kochi, India in November 2010. Professor Gidado Tahir of the University of Abuja and Professor Muhammad Ibn Junaid of NCCE attended,
- A Training of Teachers workshop for NTI’s Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) was held in January 2011; 28 master trainers and course tutors were trained, and
- Eight participants attended the Final integration Workshop on CFS into NTI Course Books in January 2011.

The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the Final Draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used in Nigeria.

COL has collaborated with Federal College of Education Yola, Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board and Radio Gotel to use Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) to train 418 nomadic teachers on CFS. Eleven participants from the State Basic Education Board, Federal College of Education (FCE) Yola, Adamawa Broadcasting Corp and Radio Gotel attended the consultative planning meeting at FCE Yola in May 2011. Seven participants from the same organisations attended the Educational Radio Script Writing Workshop in May 2011; 15 attended the constructivist pedagogy (learner-centred) training in June 2011 and 10 attended a script editing workshop in July 2011. The development of radio broadcasts and Student and Mentor Guides have been completed and were piloted by FCE Yola and Radio Gotel in November 2011.

The draft manuals for TRC/In-service and Teacher Educators have been developed for NCCE. Four draft ODL course materials developed from the CFS Manual for integration into the Year 3 Nigeria Certificate for Education Course Book of NTI were completed. All the activities in the CFS work plan were successfully completed.

A training workshop on “Successfully Leading Schools in the 21st Century” for 58 head teachers of primary schools and principals of secondary schools in Ondo and Osun States was held in August 2011. This workshop was organised by the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Ondo in collaboration with COL.

COL and NCCE organised a Quality Assurance workshop in Abuja in February 2012. At the workshop, participants revised NCCE’s Accreditation Instruments based on COL’s Quality Assurance Toolkit. Professor M.I. Junaid and 21 staff members of NCCE and Heads of Quality Assurance Units from 12 teacher education institutions attended the workshop.
Higher Education

Representatives from NOUN, RETRIDOL, the University of Calabar, the University of Lagos, the University of Ilorin and the Federal University of Technology, Minna attended the COL Review and Improvement Method (COL RIM) debrief meeting in Abuja in October 2009. Thirteen observers from NOUN also attended in the meeting.

COL and the University of Calabar signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2010 to implement COL-ROM at the University. The preparatory visit to Calabar was held in October 2010. Alison Schmidt was the lead external verifier, assisted by Christine Ofulue of NOUN. The final report has been received.

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Australia and other non-Commonwealth countries attended the roundtable, including Dr. Christine Ofulue of NOUN and Fadimatu Wakili of the Federal College of Education, Adamawa State.

Students are currently enrolled in COL’s Legislative Drafting Programme being offered by NOUN.

NOUN has signed a five-year licence agreement for the CEMBA/MPA programme (CEMBA/MPA) and is offering the degree programme. A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September/October 2009 for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade the knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants including Dr. Ibrahim Dauda Idrisu and Dr. Daniel Omoh of NOUN participated in the workshop. Professor Vincent Tenebe, Professor Chuks Maduabum, Mallam Isa Shehu and COL sponsored participants, Dr. Ayo O. Fagbemi and Dr. I. Idrisu, of NOUN attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November-1 December 2011.

The Academic Board (AB) and the Executive Governing Board (EGB) of CEMCA/MPA, had their meetings in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Dr. Daniel Omoh and Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede of NOUN attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively. Professor Chuks P. Maduabum and Dr. Ernest W. Okwuonu of NOUN are members of the Academic Board. Professor Vincent Ado Tenebe is a member of Executive Governing Board. Dr. Okwuonu is the CEMBA/MPA Coordinator in Nigeria.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Dr. Mande Samaila, Dr. I.D. Idrisu, Dr. Enerst Okwuonu and Dr. O.J. Onwe of NOUN were nominated for the programme.

COL contracted P. Tota Gangapadhyay to carry out Phase I of an Evaluation and Longitudinal Study of RETRIDOL from January-June 2010.

In partnership with RETRIDOL, COL organised a three-day workshop in May 2011 in Lagos, Nigeria on Learning Skills for Women academics. COL supported 30 participants; 12 were supported by NOUN. Participants from NOUN, Obafemi Awolowo University, Federal University of Yola, University of Calabar and the Umara Musa Yara’dua University attended the workshop.

RETRIDOL, with the support of COL, organised an eLearning and Open Content Development Workshop in May 2011 at the Koforidua Polytechnic, Ghana. COL and RETRIDOL also partnered to host a workshop on eLearning initiatives and sustainability in education in Sierra Leone in June 2011 at the University of Sierra Leone Freetown.

COL supported Professor Patrick N. Asuguo of the University of Calabar to the COL-National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) pre-conference workshop on Quality Assurance in Dual Mode Institutions in Bangalore in March 2011. The workshop was held in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Conference. COL’s then President Sir John Daniel delivered the keynote and steered the workshop deliberations on the COL RIM model. COL’s Quality Assurance Toolkit in Higher Education was made available to the participants.
COL sponsored Professor Babatunde Ipaye of NOUN, Dr. Philipa Omamhe Idogho of Auchi Polytechnic and Dr. Eunice Olufunmilayo of the University of Ado Ekiti to the Cambridge International Conference on Open, Distance and e-Learning in September 2011.

COL supported the publication of the West African Journal of Open and Flexible Learning (WAJOFEL) in September 2011. Professor Vincent Ado Tenebe of NOUN was the Editor-in-Chief and Professor Babatunde Ipaye was the Managing Editor. The second issue of the RETRIDOL Journal was published in September 2011.

RETRIDOL, in collaboration with CENDLOS and NOUN, conducted a Regional Workshop on Research Methodologies in Open and Distance Learning for Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions in Winneba, Ghana from November 9-12, 2011. Dr. Uduak Aletan and Dr. Mande Sammaila of Nigeria attended the workshop.

RETRIDOL, in collaboration with COL and NOUN, organised the National Workshop on Tutoring and Management of Feedback in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Abuja in February 2012. Participants were trained on effective distance learning tutoring skills and technology-mediated tutoring and learning facilitation. Eighty participants from NOUN, University of Ibadan, University of Benin and other educational institutions attended the workshop. Professor Babatunde Ipaye and Adewale Adesina of NOUN facilitated the workshop.

RETRIDOL, with support from COL, organised:

- a workshop on Course Materials Development for ODL Programmes in Ibadan, Nigeria in March 2012. Thirty Nigerians participated in the workshop, and
- a Leadership Training Workshop for Female Academics and Staff in Higher Education in Nigeria in May 2012. Fourteen Nigerians attended the workshop.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL facilitated a capacity building workshop in Distance Education system planning at NIEPA in May 2010. Twelve NIEPA staff including Dr. Peter K. Ojedelle, Acting Director-General attended the workshop.

COL contracted Dr. Delvaline Mowes from the Polytechnic of Namibia to conduct a consultancy to assist NIEPA develop planning and costing structures for the proposed Mass Professional Development Programme for Education Planners and Managers in Nigeria. The final report was received in June 2010.

COL organised a Flexible Skills Development Workshop in National Open University of Nigeria from September 21-24, 2010. The objective of the workshop was to introduce flexible and blended approaches into skills development activity. The participants included representatives from polytechnics, NIEPA, NOUN, the National Open University of Lagos and the Department of Mass Communications.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, Auchi Polytechnic has been identified as one of the 11 focal institutions for Flexible Skills Development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build the capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and on online community of practice. 398 people from Auchi Polytechnic have participated in the various capacity building activities.
COL sponsored Monica Ugheoke of Auchi Polytechnic to the CAPA Conference in November/December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho.

COL organised the Flexible Skills Development Workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference to provide an opportunity for the interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development. Monica Ugheoke of Auchi Polytechnic, Nicholas Akosu and O.S. Madaki of the Federal Polytechnic attended the workshop.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an ICT Infrastructure Assessment on 10 institutions including Auchi Polytechnic to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Several representatives from the Federal Polytechnic Mubi attended the workshop.

In conjunction with Auchi Polytechnic, COL organised a training workshop in June 2011. Some of the topics covered included the integration of ICT in teaching and learning, use of technology-blended and eLearning, operational characteristics of flexible institutions and change management issues arising from the use of technology. A total of 135 staff attended the 10-day programme. The Faculty of Auchi Polytechnic is now developing new flexible courses to provide access to skills training for the informal sector.

COL facilitated two workshops at Auchi Polytechnic in February 2012 on national and institutional policy for Flexible Skills Development, and gender sensitivity in TVET. The 129 participants included staff members of Auchi Polytechnic; national policymakers from the National Board of Technical Education; representatives from federal polytechnics and Women in Technical Education (WITED) chapters.

COL facilitated a one-day course design workshop for 25 senior managers and course developers from Clothing & Fashion Design and ICT Departments at Auchi Polytechnic in February 2012.

COL also co-facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with principals and champions of nine key institutions from Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past one year. Dr. Sunny Eshiotse of Auchi Polytechnic attended the meeting.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in November 2011 for TVET institutions from six African countries in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET. Imhakhu A.M.I. and Egele Angela Follaw of Auchi Polytechnic attended the workshop.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are 50 members from Nigeria.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012 to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Dr Sunny Eshiotse and Eng. Frances Osiki of Auchi Polytechnic attended the meeting. COL sponsored Dr. Sunny Eshiotse and Eng Frances Osiki to attend the CAPA Conference in Kenya on 28 April 2012.
Healthy Communities

In May 2010, Oge Ogbechie from Nigeria participated in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring. She was also engaged as a tutor for the script writing course on healthy communities that took place in August 2010.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses submitting a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Twelve Nigerians completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including three from Nigeria, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation.

The second course was on Healthy Communities; 28 Nigerians completed the course. A second script writing competition was held and three Nigerians were among the winners. They were:

- Lawrence Wakdet on “Occupational and nutritional therapy for people living with HIV and AIDS”
- Oluwakemi Aduroja on “Empowering communities with participatory community enumeration”, and
- Ugonma Cokey on “Florence saves girls from human trafficking”.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Oge Ogbechie, a Nigerian national, was on a four-month internship with COL from April-July 2010. The internship focussed on supporting the development of an online course in scriptwriting skills for community health. She worked closely with COL’s partner, Farm Radio International, to research content for the scriptwriting course, promote the course with radio stations, local health organisations and other agencies in Sub-Saharan Africa, recruit and orient facilitators and learners for the scriptwriting course, and support learners in the eFacilitators’ course. Oge Ogbechie was one of the five eFacilitators for the second online course on Community Radio.

COL worked with the Institute for Media and Society (IMESO) to run a workshop on Learning for development: Participatory programme design for community radio. Eleven communities participated – each sending two representatives, one from a licensed or prospective broadcaster, one from a development group – learning about processes and tools for programme development. The workshop was followed by a four-month distance mentoring programme. The workshop was run by the Media and Training Centre for Health (South Africa) with support from the Health and Social Development Association of Sierra Leone.

Integrating eLearning

Two workshops were held in September 2010 with Provosts of Colleges at the Nigerian National Commission of Colleges of Education (NCCE) and NOUN. The purpose of the workshops was to introduce the ICT in Education/eLearning initiatives of COL to the Colleges of Education and to discuss the course materials that COL is making available as OER for colleges.

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede of NOUN attended the first workshop in Cape Town in April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. Christine I. Ofulue, Nkese Z. Jonathan and Rotimi Joshua Ogidan of the ACDE Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency attended
the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010. Onyeka Iwuchukwu of NOUN attended the fifth workshop which was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011.

Seven people from higher education institutions in Nigeria attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including O.A. Adewale, Dr. I.O. Daniel and Dorothy N. Ofoha of NOUN; Martha N. Amadi of the University of Lagos; Uzoma Anyanwu of the University of Ibadan; Philipa Idogho of AP; Amina Idris of the National Board for Technical Education; Salihu Ingawa of the University of Abuja; Kabina Isyaku of the Universal Basic Education Commission; Muhammad Ibn Junaid of the Nigeria Commission for Colleges of Education and Rotimi Oyekanmi of the Guardian Newspaper. COL also supported Dr. Sunday Reju, a Nigerian who is currently with the Polytechnic of Namibia, and Ruth Aluko, another Nigerian, from the University of Pretoria.

Loveth Amaku, Focal Point for Nigeria, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan 2012-2015.

COL, the Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria and the National Open University of Nigeria will co-host the Seventh Pan Commonwealth Forum in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2013.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Four learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Eight learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- Four learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
- Two learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011.

Adam Aikuta, a Debt Management Advisor, and Hannatu Suleiman from the Ministry of Finance are engaged as COL e-tutors providing one-on-one tutoring via Moodle for CSDRMS eLearning.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Nigeria for 2012-2015 are:

- Technical assistance in the establishment of Nigeria’s Open School,
- Revitalising and reinvigorating RETRIDOL,
- Capacity building for ODL staff, and
- Capacity building for medical and public health workers.
BACKGROUND


SUMMARY

Rwanda is an important partner in the UNICEF-COL Child Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. It is also participating actively in COL’s skills development and healthy communities initiatives.

In June 2010 and May 2012, Alison Mead Richardson, COL Education Specialist, Skills Development, who has lived and worked in Rwanda, visited Rwanda and met with officials from DFID, Rectors’ Council, Workforce Development Authority, Rwanda Open University Task Force and the Ministry of Education. She briefed them on COL and discussed future collaboration and activities in higher education, teacher development and technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

EDUCATION

Teacher Development

Rwanda is one of eight countries taking part in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The CFS Project Point People in Rwanda are Damian Ntaganzwa, Deputy Director-General, Rwanda Education Board and Dorothy Aanyu Angura, Education Specialist, UNICEF Kigali.

CFS partners in Rwanda include TSC, the Ministry of Education; UNICEF Rwanda; Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) and Colleges of Education.

Eleven participants attended a series of Curriculum and Standards Review Workshops/Meetings between September and November 2010.

The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the Final Draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used.
LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day information and communication technology (ICT) in TVET Summit as a pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL covered the conference fees for Albert Nsengiyumya, Director of the Workers Development Agency (WDA) of Rwanda.

Three ODL training courses for basic trades developed by COL and partners – “Working with Concrete”, “Working with Timber” and “Small Engine Maintenance” – have been provided to Rwanda’s Workforce Development Agency.

Healthy Communities

In May 2010, Jean Paul Ntezimana from Rwanda took part in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Moise Tuyishimire of Rwanda completed the course. More than 80 scripts, including one from Rwanda were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. The second course was on community health; Moise Tuyishimire completed the course. More than 120 scripts were submitted to the second competition.

The winning scripts from both competitions were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to approximately 350 radio and rural development organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Integrating eLearning

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 25, 2011. Gerard Rwagasana of the National University of Rwanda attended.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Kakoma Sakatolo Zambeze of the National University of Rwanda attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes,
namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6, including Dr. Erasme Rwanamiza of the Ministry of Education and COL Focal Point.

Dr. Rwanamiza also attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Two learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2010,
- One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2010,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
- Four learners took the WB Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Rwanda for 2012-2015 are:

- Development of a national ODL policy, strategic plan and implementation framework,
- Building the capacity of teachers and lecturers in the development and production of ODL materials,
- Building private sector capacity to exploit the ICT infrastructure,
- Building the capacity of teachers and lecturers to use ICT in teaching and learning,
- Developing a structured in-service teacher training programme (INSETT), clearly defining planning, curriculum, certification and methods of instruction including ODL, and
- Supporting the WDA to introduce flexible and blended approaches to the TVET system to improve quality and increase access.
SEYCHELLES

COL Focal Point: Ms. Marie-Reine Hoareau, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

A small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 88,000, Seychelles is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean. Seychelles has played a major role in the establishment and expansion of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). A Seychelles national, John Lesperance, is currently COL’s Education Specialist, VUSSC. Seychelles has contributed to COL’s budget since 2008.

SUMMARY

Seychelles has taken a leadership role with VUSSC from its inception. The Hon. Minister Danny Faure was a vocal champion of the idea as Minister of Education. Seychelles is also playing an active role in the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA) and participated in COL’s “Open Educational Resources (OER) for Open Schools”. Two institutions in Seychelles are undertaking quality audits with COL’s Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM).

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and community technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Seychelles is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Alexandre Alix Bastienne of the Land Marine Ltd. in Seychelles attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. Participants developed a diploma programme on
Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Maryanne F. Marie of the Seychelles Agricultural and Horticultural Training Centre, Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Hazel Marengo Midzy of the School of Business Studies and Accounting attended the workshop.

Merina Andimignon of Seychelles attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

The launch of the implementation of VUSSC courses was held in Seychelles on 2 March 2012. The Vice President of Seychelles, the Honourable Danny Faure, gave the opening speech. Seven speakers presented their experiences on the use of VUSSC course materials and the TQF. Jean-Michel Domingue of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority gave a presentation on “Referencing to the TQF and Registration of Courses”. Sixteen participants from educational institutions and agencies in Seychelles attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles from March 5-16, 2012.

Jean Andre Alcindor of the Ministry of Education enrolled in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course and Michelle Rosalind Denys, also from the Ministry of Education, participated in the VUSSC LINUX online training course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance from the Seychelles.

COL and the University of Seychelles (UniSey) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2010 to offer VUSSC courses. The Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA) has also agreed to offer the VUSSC Tour Guiding course that was completed in 2009.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Jean-Michel Domingue of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority attended the meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Fiona Ernesto attended the meeting.

The TQF Procedures and Guideline document was officially launched on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and 3 May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia. The TQF can be downloaded from the VUSSC website. Seychelles has referenced the National Framework to the TQF in 2010.

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Alex Souffe of the Seychelles Ministry of Education was one of 30 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include
Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Alex Souffe of the Ministry of Education attended the AGM.

Seychelles attended the Steering Committee Meeting in Gaborone in September 2009. The meeting focussed on the progress to date and made necessary adjustments and forward-looking strategies to ensure that outcomes would be fully achieved on time.

Seychelles is one of six countries taking part in COL’s “OER for Open Schools” initiative. Country Management Committees were established, and they met on a regular basis. Agathe Lewin was appointed the Seychelles Country Consultant.

Three workshops were held in-country of which the third workshop on print-based course was held in July 2010. The Life Skills and Science team completed the print-based units, and these are being uploaded to Moodle.

Sandra Michelle Mathiot-Nizeyimana of the National Institute of Education and Veronique Pillay of Mont Fleuri Secondary, Seychelles attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OER was held in Delhi on the 26th and 27th of November, 2009. Alex Souffe of the Ministry of Education and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Seychelles was represented by Rosianna Jules and Sandra Mathiot Nizyeimana of the National Institute of Education.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to the COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

A COMOSA workshop on Research in Open Schooling was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Alex Souffe of the Ministry of Education attended the Workshop.

The National Institute of Education participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.


With the assistance of the local “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee and Marie-Reine Hoareau, Seychelles Focal Point for COL, COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The Honourable Macsuzy Mondon, Minister of Education and the Permanent Secretary, attended the AGM.

The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Ten people from Seychelles representing the University of Seychelles, the Ministry of Education and secondary schools attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was developed at the end of the workshop.
The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. Seychelles reported that the OER content has been used in some schools and is committed the full roll-out in mid-2012. Members have also agreed to write a book on the experience for 2012/2013. Alex Souffe of the University of Seychelles and Mr. Michael Antoine of Grand-Anse Praslin Secondary School, Seychelles attended the Steering Committee Meeting.

The launch of “OER for Open Schools” was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, Rosianna Jules of the University of Seychelles gave a presentation on, “Our journey in making ODL content for conventional schools – a first for us”. Representatives from the University of Seychelles, Ministry of Education and several secondary schools attended the workshop and launch.

**Higher Education**

Jean-Michel Domingue of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority attended the COL Review and Improvement Model (RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria in October 2009.

The National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS) has committed to undergoing a COL RIM Assessment. Following the Assessment, implementation was completed at NIHSS in December 2011 and at the Seychelles Institute of Management in January 2012. The NIHSS implementation was part of a Commonwealth Secretariat-COL partnership.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Integrating eLearning**

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Alex Souffe of the University of Seychelles attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Jean-Michael Domingue of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority, Fiona Ernesta of the Technical and Further Education, Ministry of Education and Alex Souffe of the National Institute of Education, Ministry of Education.

Marie-Reine Hoareau, Focal Point for Seychelles, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.
eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in Seychelles took eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Seychelles for 2012-2015 are:

- ODL for outer islands,
- Capacity building for curriculum developers to create interactive online learning materials,
- Access to peer reviewed papers, materials and books,
- ODL for training in farming/agriculture, and
- Quality assurance for tertiary education.
SIERRA LEONE

COL Focal Point: Mrs. Musu Gorvie, Ministry of Education, Science & Technology

BACKGROUND

With a population of about five million, Sierra Leone does not qualify as a “small state”; however, it was invited to participate in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) at the request of then Minister of Education, the Honourable Dr. Alpha T. Wurie. There has been a proliferation of open and distance learning (ODL) programmes in Sierra Leone in recent years, particularly in the area of teacher development, resulting in an urgent need for the Ministry of Education to develop appropriate policies and guidelines to ensure quality assurance. Sierra Leone contributed to COL’s budget in 2010/2011.

SUMMARY

COL has worked closely with Freetown Teachers’ College (FTC) for a number of years. Sierra Leone is involved with VUSSC and is also participating in COL’s healthy community initiatives.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Sierra Leone is one of 33 members of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The VUSSC Team Leaders’ meeting, in preparation for the Apia workshop, was held in Vancouver in October 2009. Five team leaders attended the meeting including Josephus Choe Mamie Jr. from Sierra Leone. The Team leaders drafted and agreed on a framework for the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, and hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The main purpose of the workshop was to develop a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme was aimed at learners who would want to start their own business and or pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Mr.
Peter Dennis Musa of the Department of Horticulture, School of Forestry and Horticulture, Njala University attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. James L.S. Kollie of the University of Sierra Leone attended the workshop.

The Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore in November 2011, to prepare and train the Team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore, from 17 November-2 December 2011. Professor Abdullah Mansaray (Team Leader from Sierra Leone) attended both meetings. Blanche O.O. Macauley participated in the International Training and Materials Development Meeting.

Josephine Scott-Manga of University of Sierra Leone attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

The VUSSC Interlocutors’ Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress reports, challenges and next steps. Training in Monitoring and Evaluation was conducted during the two-day meeting. S.P. Sorrie from Sierra Leone attended the meeting.

Teacher Education

COL organised a workshop on Instructional Design in Freetown, Sierra Leone in March 2010. Thirty course writers from the Freetown Teachers’ College (FTC), University of Sierra Leone and other teacher training colleges were trained on instructional design.

Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and COL signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 to focus on the training of head teachers and principals of schools in The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The COL-MUN Workshop for the Development of Materials for the Training of Head Teachers and School Principals was held in Ghana from March 29-April 1, 2010. H.A. Thorpe and K.H.S. Lansane of Freetown Teachers’ College and Stephen S. Bockarie of the Milton Margai College of Education, Science and Technology attended the workshop. A training manual for head teachers and principals in the four countries was developed.

The training of the Master Trainers from The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone was held in Banjul from 29 November-3 December 2010.

Thirty (30) teachers and head teachers from Sierra Leone were trained in “Innovative School Management Strategies and Techniques”, at a specially organised workshop for head teachers and principals of schools, which was held in Freetown Teachers College in October 2011.

COL conducted a study on “Women’s participation in ODL programmes: A study of NTI Kaduna and FTC Sierra Leone”. COL administered questionnaires to 70 selected female students and held focus group discussions in late March 2010 with 22 selected students from the Teacher’s Certificate and HTC courses. The data collected will be part of COL’s Study on Gender.

COL supported Freetown Teachers’ College to build the capacity of its academic staff on ODL and to develop modules for the Higher Teachers’ Certificate (Primary) course. A writers’ workshop on the development of modules for Years 2 and 3 was held in Sierra Leone in May 2011. Thirty-five writers and editors from Freetown Teachers College, Milton Margai College of Education and Njala University were
trained by COL. The Year 1 and Year 2 modules for Higher Teachers Certificate (Primary) courses have been completed. The development of the Year 3 course modules has also been completed. The editing of the Year 3 modules is in progress.

The training of Master trainers for the implementation of the Open Resources for English Language Teaching (ORELT) project in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Gambia was held in Banjul in July 2012. Five (5) teacher educators from Sierra Leone were trained in how to adapt and use the ORELT modules.

**Higher Education**

The Research and Training Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL), was supported by COL to organise a three-day workshop on eLearning initiatives and sustainability. The workshop was held at the University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, in June 2011. Twenty-one participants from the Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone and other educational institutions attended the workshop.

RETRIDOL, in collaboration with CENDLOS, Ghana and NOUN, Nigeria, conducted a regional workshop on Research Methodologies in Open and Distance Learning for Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions in the West African Sub-region. It was held in Winneba, Ghana in November 2011. Ezekel Duramany-Laklah of Sierra Leone attended the workshop.

RETRIDOL, with support from COL, organised a leadership training workshop for Female Academics and Staff in Higher Education in West Africa Sub-Region in Nigeria in May 2012. One participant from Sierra Leone attended the workshop.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Healthy Communities**

Salis Gbandia from Sierra Leone completed the Healthy Communities Course, one of the online training courses supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

Representatives of media, health and development stakeholders in Sierra Leone were introduced to COL’s community learning programme approach at a workshop in Freetown, Sierra Leone in August 2011. The workshop was organised by the Health and Social Development Association (HASDA) of Sierra Leone.

Emmanuel Konjoh of HASDA attended COL’s Healthy Communities’ Partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning, train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

COL engaged Emmanuel Konjoh as a trainer-facilitator for a workshop to introduce participatory programme development to community media groups in Nigeria in March 2012.

COL supported a programme development process in Kailahun District which started in January 2012. A one-week design workshop was facilitated by the Media and Training Centre for Health (MTC, South Africa) and led locally by HASDA of Sierra Leone. The workshop provided training for 15 local community development, media and health workers (8 women, 10 youth). Participants created a design document for *Munde Mia*, a programme concerned with health issues related to water and sanitation. The face-to-face workshop was followed by a distance mentoring programme run by MTC and HASDA.
OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including S.P. Sorrie of the Freetown Teachers College.

Musu Gorvie, Focal Point for Sierra Leone, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The Meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- Two learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
- Four learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
- One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Sierra Leone for 2012-2015 are:

- Reviewing and finalise the existing draft national policy on ODL,
- Developing a national qualifications framework that would take into consideration the various levels and types of ODL programs,
- Creating a national coordinating Unit or Centre for ODL,
- Training personnel on the use of ICT in ODL programs – produce audio and DVD/CDs on existing modules, and
- Training teachers in life skills/livelihood skills and reproductive health including support for study tours to share best practices.
SOUTH AFRICA

COL Focal Point:  Ms. Pat Bulling, Department of Higher Education & Training

BACKGROUND

South Africa is an acknowledged leader in open and distance learning (ODL). It contributes to capacity development in the continent and beyond through its experts. South Africa is a key partner to COL that participates in a number of COL activities.

As a major donor, South Africa has a seat on the COL Board of Governors. Jenny Glennie of the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) is a member of COL Board of Governors and the Deputy Chair (2009-2010 and 2011-2012). She is also a member of the Board’s Audit Committee.

Professor Veronica McKay of the University of South Africa is an Honorary COL Advisor. Mr. G. Jeppie of the Department of Higher Education & Training was the Focal Point for COL from 2009-2011.

SUMMARY

South Africa is an active partner in the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) and has played a major role in the development of the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) for the Virtual Universities for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), even though it is not a member of the consortium. COL is working with partners in South Africa in higher education, teacher education, healthy communities and integrated eLearning.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Joseph Sannie Samuels of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was the Regional Guest at the TQF Management Committee Meeting in Vancouver in August 2009. SAQA has been instrumental in developing the TQF, which has been designed to support the transfer of programmes, learning materials and qualified people among the 32 small states and between the small states and other countries. The work was conducted by Dr James Keevy, under the leadership of the Executive Director, Samuel Isaacs.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the TQF Management Committee Meeting and the TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to “translate in the practice” the implementation of the TQF for VUSSC. Joseph Sannie Samuels and Shirley Anne Steenekamp of SAQA attended the meeting.
Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Dr. Ephraim Mhlanda of SAIDE was one of 22 partners who signed the Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Tony Mays of SAIDE attended the AGM.

COL engaged Dezlin Jacobs of SchoolNet South Africa to conduct a five-day workshop in November 2010 in Morogoro, Tanzania for the female lecturers of the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) in the uses of information and communication technology (ICT).

COL sponsored a workshop hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Ephraim Mhlanga of SAIDE attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Kirston Greenop of MINDSET was the consultant for the Workshop.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted. Tony Mays of SAIDE attended the workshop.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Dr. Ephraim Mhlanga of SAIDE and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. During this period, SADC-CDE enrolled eight faculty members from five SADC countries with the University of Pretoria for the Certificate in Gender.

Teacher Education

The annual Partners Advisory Council Meeting of the Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium was held in Cape Coast in August 2009. The University of South Africa, University of Fort Hare and University of Pretoria presented their progress reports at the meeting. The participants reviewed the programmes, and a Work Plan for 2010 was adopted.

South Africa is one of eight countries participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The CFS Project Point People in South Africa are Hopi Mboweni, ACELO programme coordinator, University of Limpopo and Junko Mabuchi, Associate Education Specialist, UNICEF South Africa. Partners in South Africa include the Ministry of Basic Education, UNICEF South Africa and the University of Limpopo.
The following CFS workshops have been held in South Africa:

- Advanced Certificate in Education – Life Orientation (ACELO) Curriculum Review, March/April, 2010. Eleven participants from the University of Limpopo and one participant from the University of Johannesburg attended the workshop.
- Curriculum Review and Materials Development workshops, April 2010. Eight participants from the University of Limpopo attended.
- Materials Writing Retreat, June 2010. Eight participants from the University of Limpopo attended the workshop.
- Advocacy workshop with other universities to raise awareness on CFS and show how the University of Limpopo integrated CFS in the ACELO programme, November 2010. Twenty-six participants from the University of Limpopo, University of Venda, University of Witwatersrand, Tshwane University of Technology, Walter Sisulu University, Central University of Technology and University of Pretoria attended.
- CFS Workshop, Kochi, India, November 2010. Nineteen participants attended including Jenny Glennie of SAIDE; Hopi Mboweni and Professor M.J. Themane of the University of Limpopo and Junko Mabuchi of UNICEF South Africa.
- Curriculum writing workshop to develop/complete ACELO modules, Limpopo, March 2011. Thirteen participants from the University of Limpopo and UNICEF South Africa) attended.

The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the Final Draft set of Child Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used by all participating countries.

A Curriculum Review was completed, and the draft ACELO modules were developed.

The modules for the Associate Certificate in Education-Life Skills programme at the University of Limpopo were finalised in November 2011 and are ready for use by students.

The Limpopo Province Department of Education, Link Community Development and nine post-secondary institutions took part in a Training of Teachers workshop at the University of Limpopo in February 2012.

COL hosted a National Discourse Colloquium on CFS in May 2012 that included representatives from UNICEF-South Africa, the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Departments of Education and 11 post-secondary institutions.

All the activities in the CFS work plan were successfully completed.

Higher Education

Professor Adele Thomas of the University of Johannesburg facilitated a case method workshop for the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme. The workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September/October 2009.

Dr. Eleanore Johannes and Liane Griesel of UNISA attended the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

Gail White of Media & Training Centre for Health, South Africa, attended the international training-of-trainers workshop in Vancouver in September/October 2009. Key national and regional partners from
In May 2010, one South African participated in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring. She was also selected as a tutor for the script writing course on healthy communities that took place in August 2010.

Three South Africans participated in the Healthy Communities course, one of the two Farm Radio International online training courses supported by COL in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

In May 2010, COL conducted a half-day workshop with Media and Training Centre for Health (MTC) staff on designing community learning programmes. They were informed by demonstration projects in Malawi, Solomon Islands and Tanzania, and held discussions about adaptation in South Africa and a plan for follow-up activities in 2010-2011.

In October 2010, COL supported Story Workshop (Malawi) to conduct a five-day master trainers’ course in learning programme development in Cape Town, organised by MTC, in which 12 representatives of media and other stakeholder groups participated, including groups engaged in the development of community learning programmes in Northern and Western Cape provinces.

Working with UNESCO Windhoek, COL engaged MTC to support capacity and programme development in Namibia (ongoing from June 2010), Lesotho (2012), Cameroon (March 2012), Nigeria (February 2012), and Sierra Leone (November 2011).

MTC hosted COL’s Healthy Communities Partners’ Workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. Twelve national and regional partner groups from across the Commonwealth participated, developing knowledge and skills concerning the use of ODL for non-formal learning about health and related community development.

The GRINS software application, which enables the integration of mobile telephones to support interaction and user generated content was installed in three radio stations (Atlantis, Upington and Worcester) in South Africa in September 2011. Local staff were trained.

COL partnered with MTC to advance a community learning programme initiative in South Africa. In 2009, “Summer for All”, an HIV/AIDS community learning programme, was developed in Northern Cape Province, South Africa. The programme is increasing knowledge and support for people living with HIV and AIDS through identifying needs, monthly contact using radio and mobiles, face-to-face interactions and measuring the impact. Twelve representatives of health, development, media, and community groups in Upington have been trained in community ODL skills, and 18 episodes of “Summer for All” have been broadcast. By March 2011, 1,143 targeted learners were recruited in the greater Upington area, selected by high schools and non-governmental organisations, in particular the Northern Cape AIDS Forum.

In May 2010, COL conducted another half-day workshop with Radio Riverside staff on COL’s community learning model. The key areas covered included identifying key messages and expected learning outcomes as well as taking a more peer- and story-based approach to learning content.

COL has supported MTC to develop additional community learning programmes in Atlantis and Worcester in Western Cape Province. Consultations were done in both communities in December 2010. Design processes were conducted between January and March 2011 with programmes operational by April. Some 40 representatives of health, development, media and community groups in the two sites have been training in community ODL skills. Approximately 1,700 learners have been engaged in the two sites.
COL supported Gail White from MTC to attend the 10th World Conference of Community Radio Broadcasters in November 2010 in Argentina. COL and AMARC sponsored a session on educational media, in which she presented.

MTC participated in the Healthy Community partners’ workshop to review and plan COL’s programming, held immediately prior to PCF6 in Kochi, India in November 2011. MTC also participated in the COL-UNESCO seminar, Learning from Community Media, as well as PCF6’s Community Development theme.

COL and MTC organised the Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. Gail White and Busiswa Ngcebetsha of MTC attended. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other.

**Integrating eLearning**

The Commonwealth Computer Navigator’s Certificate (CCNC), an ICT literacy course based on the International Computer Driver’s Licence (ICDL) using open source software, has been conceptualised with the assistance of the ICDL Foundation, Cape Town. The materials are based on the ECDL/ICDL Syllabus Version 5.0 (www.ecdl.com). The print-based materials are available at www.col.org/ccnc.

The CCNC CD (printed version) has been distributed to the ICDL and Computer Society, South Africa; Inkululeko Technologies (Pty) Ltd., Cape Town and the National Youth Development Agency, South Africa.

COL is developing modules on ICT Integration for Teacher Educators that will be available to all teacher training institutions and Ministries. Maggie Verster (principal writer) is working with teacher educators in The Gambia, Nigeria and Rwanda to develop the materials.

COL had consultative workshops and meetings on Teacher Development in ICT with the South Africa Department of (Basic) Education (DoBE) and the private sector in early December 2009. Agreements on collaboration were reached with the Department, Mindset Network, Microsoft, SchoolNet SA, University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) and Intel.

The Department of Education is willing to share materials developed for “Subject Advisors Training in ICT” with COL to use and further develop it. COL is awaiting formal consent by the DoBE. Microsoft has made “Partners in Learning” materials available to COL as OER. Intel will make “Intel Teach Materials” available to COL as OER and skoool (materials available to countries that need them).

In April 2010, COL, in collaboration with SchoolNet SA, Intel SA and Microsoft SA, hosted a seminar in Cape Town for Deans/Heads of Education from SADC countries on the integration of ICT in teacher pre-service education. It was attended by four representatives from the Department of Education (basic and higher); 18 deans/representatives from South African higher education institutions; 10 from SADC institutions and 14 representing national and international organisations related to the use of ICT in education. Two follow-up workshops were held by SchoolNet SA and Microsoft in August and October 2010.

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Professor Magda Fourie of Stellenbosch University, Professor Cheryl Hodgkinson-Williams of the University of Cape Town, Dr. Tom Larney of North-West University and Professor N.A. Ogude of the University of Pretoria attended the first workshop on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa.

Neil Butcher (NBA and OER Africa) facilitated four workshops and Professor Cheryl Hodgkinson-Williams (UCT) and Ms. Jenny Glennie (SAIDE) were speakers at the workshops. Mike Chiles (former Director in WCED) facilitated three online discussions and reported on all the workshops.
The first phase of the initiative concluded with a Policy Forum on 1 December 2010 in Paris, France where Mr. Chiles prepared the Issue Paper for UNESCO and reported on the meeting (http://oerworkshop.weebly.com). Dr. Tobias Schonwetter of the University of Cape Town attended the Forum.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them.

The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. E.L. van Staden, Pat Bulling (COL Focal Point), Monica Koen, L. Mokwena, Firoz Patel, M.R. Shasha and Aruna Singh of the Department of Higher Education and Training; Dr. Jenny Joshua of the Department of Basic Education; Dr. J.C. Botha, Oupa Majhile, Dr. Makoe Makoe, Pam Ryan and Divya Singh of UNISA; Associate Professor Laura Czerniecz of the University of Cape Town, Jenny Glennie of SAIDE and COL Board Member, Tony Mays of SAIDE and Neels van der Westhuizen of Siyavula of OER Publisher attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised a two-day workshop on the use of ICT for Teaching and Learning at the School of Technology and Innovation, Newtown Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2011. Nineteen delegates from six universities participated in the workshop. Representatives from SchoolNet SA, Microsoft SA, General Smuts High School and St. John’s Preparatory School were presenters and facilitators at the workshop.

Neil Butcher was commissioned to develop a COL-UNESCO publication Basic Guide to Open Educational Resources and the UNESCO-COL Guidelines for OER in Higher Education.

Jenny Glennie (SAIDE and OER Africa) and Neil Butcher participated in the “UNESCO-COL Guidelines for OER in Higher Education” Expert Group.

The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Susanna Ackermann of Learthings Africa, Neil Butcher and Andrew Moore of OER Africa attended the workshop.

As part of the implementation of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers, COL, in collaboration with SchoolNet SA, developed and introduced the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI) to Guyana, the Bahamas and Trinidad & Tobago. Gerald Roos and Janet Thompson (SchoolNet SA) assisted institutions in mentor training in these countries.

Gerald Roos and Neil Butcher worked with Ministry of Education officials in The Bahamas, Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago to develop ICT in Education Policies and Strategies for implementation.

An ICT Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop for the Caribbean took place on 24 November 2010 in Kochi, India. Neil Butcher and Shafika Isaacs facilitated the workshop.

Shafika Isaacs has managed the ICT in Education Survey in Caribbean countries and is conducting the impact study of eLearning in the Caribbean.

SchoolNet SA is assisting COL in the implementation of the CCTI programme in the Caribbean. Close to 100 mentors are being trained in The Bahamas and Trinidad & Tobago to act as local tutors in their countries by Gerald Roos and four South African teachers (Deb Avrey, Peter de Lisl, Brenda Howles and Fiona Beal).
Nineteen participants from the University of Pretoria, Wits University, University of South Africa, SAIDE, Central University of Technology, Vaal University of Technology, University of Witwatersrand and Effel Corporation attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

COL’s then Vice President (now President) Professor Asha Kanwar was the Guest Speaker at the 6th Lecture in the ODL Occasional Lecture Series 2011 on 2 March 2011, organised by UNISA. She also conducted a two-day workshop on “Developing Research Proposals” at the University on 3-4 March 2011.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Jenny Glennie of SAIDE and a member of COL Board of Governors; Hopi Mboweni and M. Themane of the University of Limpopo; Gail White of Media and Training Centre for Health; Yvonne Lee Read, an Australian representing the University of Witwatersrand; Folake Ruth Aluko, a Nigerian representing the University of Pretoria; Shafika Isaacs of ICT4D Professional; Mike Chiles, a consultant and Quentin R. Williams.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Mapaseka Letho of the Department of Higher Education and Training attended the meeting on behalf of Pat Bulling, Focal Point for South Africa.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Six learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
- One learner took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by South Africa for 2012-2015 are:

- Further development of the policy framework for ODL for the country,
- Developing and implementing governance, management and quality assurance standards for ODL,
• Diversifying the ODL curriculum in order to meet the diverse needs of learners from different socio-economic and language backgrounds, as well as learners with disabilities. The curriculum should include health education, poverty eradication issues and skills building for the country,
• Improving the funding model and mainstream the funding for ODL within the education budget of the country, and
• Proactively attacking the issue of the NEET (not in education, employment or training) youth in the country via ODL opportunities.
SWAZILAND

COL Focal Point: Mr. Peterson Dlamini, Ministry of Education & Training

BACKGROUND

Swaziland is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 1.2 million people. One of the country’s key education challenges is the recruitment and training of teachers to meet the demands of free primary education. Swaziland is a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA) and a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Swaziland is participating in several key COL programmes including the UNICEF-COL Child Friendly-Schools (CFS) initiative, the Commonwealth Open Schools Association and the Virtual Universities for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). The focus has been on developing capacity in open schooling and tertiary institutions.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Swaziland is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Vinah N. Nkambule of the University of Swaziland attended the workshop.

Dr. Walter Sukati and Dr. Betty Dlamini attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Sharayi Chakanyuka of the University of Swaziland participated in the VUSSC’s Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.
VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Peterson Sipho Dlamini of the Swaziland Ministry of Education and Training attended the meeting.

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Dr. Walter Sukati of the University of Swaziland was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Dr. Walter Sukati and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. The delegates included Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA) members from Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

COL organised a five-day workshop on Multimedia Learning at the University of Swaziland in August 2010. The focus of the workshop was to expose ODL practitioners, instructors and teachers at institutions involved in open and distance learning, to a broad but basic overview of multimedia learning methods and techniques.

Between July and December, 2010, ODL Policy Sensitisation and Policy Formulation Training Workshops, facilitated by SADC-CDE, were held in Botswana, Mauritius and Swaziland.

Enock Mkhwanazi of Swaziland attended a workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education in Botswana in July 2011.

COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits for open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Nokuthula Vilakati of the University of Swaziland attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop including Glen Mazibuko and Nozipho Ziyane of the Emlalatini Development Centre.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during COL’s sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

The University of Swaziland participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM)
workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Glen Mazibuko of the Emlalatini Development Centre attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Glen Mazibuko of the Emlalatini Development Centre attended the workshop and launch.

Teacher Development

Swaziland is one of 10 countries taking part in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) project. The Contribution Agreement was signed by the Ministry of Education. The CFS Project Point People in Swaziland are Peterson Dlamini, Chief Inspector, Ministry of Education and Training and Lineo Vilakazi, Education Specialist, UNICEF Swaziland.

CFS partners include the Ministry of Education & Training, UNICEF Swaziland, Nazarene Training College, Ngwane Teachers College, William Pitcher College and the University of Swaziland.

CFS workshops held in Swaziland include:

- Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) Curriculum Review and Refinement Meetings and Standards and Indicators for SCCS Review and Refinement Meetings, January-February 2010. Sixteen people were trained.
- Curriculum and Standards Review Workshop, March 2010. Sixteen participants/resource personnel from the Ministry of Education and Training, teacher training colleges, the University of Swaziland and UNICEF attended.
- Pilot testing workshops for 29 teacher educators, September 2010; for 31 Teacher Resource Centre managers, head teachers and in-service personnel, August 2010; and for 57 head teachers in September 2010.
- Training of Teachers (ToT) capacity building workshop for primary head teachers, inspectors, and TRC managers at Manzini, Shiselwenwas, October 2010. Forty-six people attended the workshop.
- ToT meeting in Hhohho, Lubombo, October 2010. Forty-two participants attended the workshop.
- Three ToT capacity building workshops for teacher educators from Ngwane Teacher Training College, Nazarene College and William Pitcher College, SCOT and UNISWA, October 2010. A total of 163 participants were trained.
- The CFS pre-conference workshop was held in Kochi, India in November 2010 prior to PCF6. Peterson S. Dlamini of the Ministry of Education & Training, Jane Malinga of the Ngwane Teacher Training College and Lineo Vilakazi of UNICEF Swaziland attended the workshop.
- 170 participants attended a one-day sensitisation/training workshop in March 2012 for pre-service educators on how to use the Inqaba, a guide for implementing the seven CFS Pillars in a school/classroom situation.

The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the final draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used by all participating countries.

A curriculum review report, a set of CFS standards and indicators for teacher education and the manuals for TRCs/head teachers and teacher educators for CFS were completed.
All activities in the CFS workplan have been successfully completed.

**Higher Education**

Dr. Walter Sukati of the University of Swaziland attended the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL-RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria in October 2009.

COL sponsored Nokhutula Vilakati and Karen Ferriera-Myers to take the Master of Instructional Design and Technology (MIDT) online programme offered by the Open University Malaysia.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL sponsored Thobile Sukati of Swaziland to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference on Entrepreneurial Polytechnic which was held in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2010.

**Integrating eLearning**

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. Walter Sukati and Nokuthula Thembi Vilakati of the University of Swaziland attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Sharayi Chakanyuka and Dr. Walter Sukati of the University of Swaziland; Jane Maseko of the Ministry of Education and Peterson Dlamini of the Ministry of Education and COL Focal Point.

Peterson Dlamini attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once in three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Swaziland for 2012-2015 are:
• Completing the first phase of mainstreaming the Child-Friendly School models to all Primary schools in the country and start the process in secondary and high schools,
• Finalising the national ODL policy and implement it by first building capacity in the four teacher training institutions to use ODL methodologies to train and upgrade larger numbers of teachers to address the shortage of teachers,
• Building capacity in pre-service teacher training colleges so they can successfully handle both full-time and distance education programmes,
• Providing technical support for capacity building workshops on material/curriculum development for use on Distance Teacher Education mode, and
• Establishing a Department of Distance Education in the Ngwane Teacher Training College and Nazarene Teacher Training College.
TANZANIA

COL Focal Point: Mrs. Lambertha Mahai, Institute of Adult Education

BACKGROUND

A country of about 44 million people in East Africa, Tanzania has made significant progress towards achieving universal primary education in recent years. Tanzania has a long association with COL, particularly through the Open University of Tanzania, and is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Professor Tolly Mbwette, Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania is an Honorary COL Advisor and a UNESCO-COL Chair in Open and Distance Learning (ODL).

SUMMARY

COL is working with Tanzania partners in a number of areas, including open schooling, teacher development, skills development and healthy communities.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Lambertha Mahai of the Institute of Adult Education, Tanzania and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

COL engaged Schoolnet South Africa to conduct a five-day workshop in November 2010 in Morogoro for the female lecturers of the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) in the uses of information and communication technology (ICT). The 25 lecturers learned about the personal and professional growth opportunities and experiences afforded by the use of ICT.

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) Gender Winter School was held in Pretoria, South Africa from June 1-4, 2011. Participants from Botswana, Lesotho and Tanzania attended the training.

Dr. Wilberforce Meena of Tanzania attended a workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education in Botswana in July 2011.

A strategic session with the Institute of Adult Education and COL was held in Tanzania in September 2010 to discuss a plan of action to support IAE’s initiative to mainstream open schooling into secondary education. Thirteen participants from IAE including its Director and COL Focal Point Ms. Lambertha Mahai attended the session. Areas identified were: capacity building and support to develop multi-media
material using radio, TV and eLearning, training in instructional design, policy development, monitoring and evaluation, and training.

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Ms. Lambertha Mahai of the Institute of Adult Education was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Lambertha Mahai of the Institute of Adult Education attended the AGM.

COL co-facilitated a two-day workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010. Representatives from Mozambique, Zambia and Leonia Kassamia and Rashid Mohamed Chuachua of the Institute of Adult Education, Tanzania were trained to draft strategic plans for integrating multi-media in their open schools. The workshop is also the first step in supporting Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia to develop digital content over the next two years.

In December 2009, COL assisted the Institute of Adult Education (in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training) with the preparation of a guide for registering and accrediting ODL providers. The draft guidelines were submitted to the Ministry of Education for consideration.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop including Fidelice Mafumiko and Tadei Mamba of the Institute of Adult Education.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A research agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Lambertha Mahai of the Institute of Adult Education attended the workshop.

The Institute of Adult Education participated in the Research Study on Integrating Vocational and Academic Education and the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a Gender-Sensitive ICT Strategy for Open Schooling Workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Genoveve Kituli Ntiluhoka of the Institute of Adult Education attended the workshop.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch.
Lambertha Mahai of the Institute of Adult Education attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER & Copyright Policy for Open Schools workshop and launch.

**Teacher Education**

Dr. Cornelia Muganda of the Open University of Tanzania attended a writers’ workshop on the OER for English Language Teaching (ELT) in Accra in August 2009. The writers reviewed the draft modules and uploaded the draft modules onto the ODL template.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL in partnership with the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) facilitated a workshop for institutional heads from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in flexible approaches to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in June 2010. Athman A. Ahmed of the College of Business Education and Naiman S. Lemeirut and Joseph Msambichaka of the Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology attended the workshop.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) has been selected to join 11 key institutions for flexible development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and an online community of practice. Sixty eight people from MIST have participated in the various capacity building activities.

COL sponsored Scholastica Loppa of Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology to the CAPA conference in November/December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho.

COL organised the Flexible Skills Development workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the CAPA conference to provide an opportunity for interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions. Scholastica Loppa of MIST and Athman A. Ahmed of the College of Business Education attended the workshop.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an ICT Infrastructure Assessment on 10 institutions including MIST to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Tumwidike Linnah of the Tanzania Institute of Accountancy; M. Lusato of MIST; E.E. Mgonja and Hans Luambano of the National Institute of Transport and A.A. Ahmed of the College of Business Education attended the workshop.

COL co-facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with Principals and Champions of nine key institutions from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past year. Prof. J. Msambichaka and Dr. Lusajo Minga of MIST attended the meeting.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET in November 2011 for TVET institutions from six African
countries. Watson Yotham and Lulu Luflenge of Mbeya Institute of Science & Technology attended the workshop.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are 16 members from Tanzania in the Network.

COL consultant David Walker was at Mbeya Institute of Science & Technology from 27 March - 7 April 2012 to advise on strategic planning, establish distance learning through outreach centres and establish a TV and radio station. Staff members of the Institute were involved in a range of workshops and activities over the 10 days.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012, to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Professor Joseph Msambichaka and Dr. Naiman Lemerut of the Mbeya Institute of Science & Technology attended the meeting.

COL sponsored Professor Joseph Msambichaka and Dr. Naiman Lemerut of the Mbeya Institute of Science & Technology to the CAPA Conference on 28 April 2012.

**Healthy Communities**

In May 2010, one Tanzanian participated in a three-week online regional training course on distance tutoring.

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Ten Tanzanians completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including seven from Tanzania, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. Lazarus Laiser’s entry on “Transforming bicycles into a vehicle of innovation” was one of the 15 winners. The second course was on Healthy Communities; three Tanzanians completed the course.

The winning scripts from the script writing competition were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

A community learning programme on HIV/AIDS was developed in Karagwe, Tanzania in November 2009. The workshop included participation from Karagwe local public administration, three community radio stations, the Community Media Network of Tanzania and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS as well as the Institute for Adult Education and the Media Institute of Southern Africa, Tanzania.

Rose Haji of Gender and Media Southern Africa attended COL’s Healthy Communities partners’ workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.
Integrating eLearning

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Professor Tolly Mbwette of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) attended the first workshop in April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Rainen Moshi and Nehem Mallya of Muhimbili University of Health & Allied Sciences and Mulembwe Munaku of the University of Dar es Salaam attended the workshop.

COL conducted a one-day advocacy workshop on OER with the Open University of Tanzania in May 2011. The workshop explored how to use OER to enhance existing courses and offerings, improve existing materials, create new parts of courses/offerings, create new courses and use students to generate OER. Twenty-two participants from OUT attended.

COL conducted a one-day workshop on OER for 27 participants at the Institute for Adult Education in May 2011.

A TVET instructional design workshop for Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia took place in April 2011 in Luanshya, Zambia. Two participants from Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology participated in the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Gideon Paul Kwegisabo of Muhimbili University and Dr. Fidelice Mafumiko of the Institute of Adult Education, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

COL’s then Vice President (now President) Professor Asha Kanwar gave the keynote addresses at the African Council of Distance Education (ACDE) Pre-conference Workshop on E-Learning on 8 July 2011 and the ACDE Conference on 13 July 2011. She also presented a paper on “Leading with Power and Influence” at the Workshop for Vice Chancellors, Principals and Provosts at Mzumbe University on 11 and 14 July 2011.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Joseph Msambichaka of Mbeya Institute of Science and Technology, Shiv Kumar Tripathi, an Indian national representing Mzumbe University and Bart Sullivan, a Canadian based at Farm Radio International affiliate in Tanzania. Lambertha Mahai of IAE and COL Focal Point also attended PCF6.

Lambertha Mahai, Focal Point for Tanzania, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the
mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Learners from Tanzania were involved as follows:

- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Three learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- Five learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010, and
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Tanzania for 2012-2015 are:

- ODL upgrading programmes for open schools practitioners who develop ODL study materials and curriculum, and teacher professional development in science and language subjects,
- Training in eLearning and use of ICT including mobile phones in teaching and learning,
- Developing a national ODL Quality Assurance system,
- Strengthening the UNESCO-COL Chair at the Open University of Tanzania, and
- Collaborative open schooling research in the use of mobile phones and the vocationalisation of secondary education.
UGANDA

COL Focal Point:  Mrs. Elizabeth Gabona, Ministry of Education and Sports

BACKGROUND

Uganda is a country of about 33 million people in East Africa. The country’s higher education system is one of the oldest in the region. Makerere University pioneered formal open and distance learning (ODL) higher education. There remains significant potential for the growth and expansion of ODL, particularly in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). With the success of universal primary and secondary education in Uganda, there is growing pressure for the establishment of an open university. Uganda is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

COL is working with remote teacher training colleges and Batwa and Bakiga communities in Uganda to develop capacity and improve livelihoods under COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F). The emphasis is on reaching the unreached. Partners in Uganda are also participating in, skills development and healthy communities initiatives.

EDUCATION

Teacher Education

COL has provided a grant to support the improvement in primary teacher programmes in Uganda and Zambia. The objectives are to broaden awareness and understanding of Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) resources at a range of primary teacher training institutions and support rural-based colleges to explore the inclusion of TESSA resources in their programmes.

The workshop for Primary Teacher Training Colleges was held in Kampala in October 2009. The objective of the workshop was to introduce a small number of primary teachers colleges to TESSA, with a view of using TESSA materials in the colleges’ pre-service certificate programme. Twenty-three participants from six primary teachers colleges (St. Aloysius, Busuubizi Core, St. John Bosco, Ibanda, Rakai and Canon Lawrence), seven from Kyambogo University and one from Makarere University attended the workshop.

Five primary teacher colleges (St. Aloysius, Mora Busuubizi Core, Ibanda, Rakai and Canon Lawrence) are using the TESSA materials.
LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

In partnership with the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA), COL facilitated a workshop for institutional heads from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in flexible approaches to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in June 2010. The workshop was hosted by the Mombasa Technical Training Institute. Nabasinje Massy of Makerere University Business School (MUBS), Uganda attended the workshop.

COL organised a Flexible Skills Development Workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held after the CAPA conference to provide an opportunity for interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions. Richard Bekalaze of MUBS attended the workshop.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Dinah Nahabwe, Eldred Kyomuhangi, Joy Galaige and Cathy Nassali of MUBS attended the workshop.

Learning for Farming

COL’S Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative was launched by Makerere University with the support of COL in Kabala district. The initiative mobilised potato-growing farmers and Batwa tribes who are honey gatherers. A workshop on Strengthening University Capacity for Promoting, Facilitating and Teaching Rural Innovation Processes (SUCAPRI) was conducted for members of L3F.

Makerere University conducted a learning needs survey among the Bakiga and Batwa communities in Kabale district. Based on the survey results, audio and multimedia learning materials have been developed on six modules on issues related to financial management, market development, apiary production, honey harvesting methods and best farming practices. Learning materials are being developed in English and in Rushika. The participating communities have been linked with banks for credit and financial support.

A workshop, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation, was organised in Nairobi, Kenya for the L3F participants. The modalities for integrating climate change issues at farm level operations in L3F were identified. Nodumo Dhlamini of RUFORUM, Makerere University; Zizinga Alex, ODL Network, Makerere University; Dr. Moses Tenywa of Makerere University and Sunday Mutabazi of the Government of Uganda attended the workshop.

COL supported a workshop for African partners on integrating linkages between community banks and commercial banks in L3F in India in June 14-20, 2010. The participants, which included L3F partners such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), banks and universities from Kenya and Uganda, were trained by illiterate and semi-literate women involved in community banking and by officers of banks and financial institutions. They also visited sites in Theni and Dindigul and saw the actual community banking in operation and enterprises developed through community banking. They identified strategies for similar linkages in their own countries. James Lukenge of Makerere University and George William Kiwuuwa, Equity Bank, Uganda attended the workshop.

Through COL’s efforts, six senior Executive MBA students from Queen’s University, Canada, as part of their course, visited the L3F initiative in Makerere University and helped to develop a business plan for the potato farmers who are involved in L3F.
Makerere University, in collaboration with WARID Telecom, has developed a Close User Group as a well as a web-based SMS Platform for mobile phone based learning and is reaching 1080 farmers in Kabale under L3F.

Farmers in the two innovation platforms of Bufundi and Bubare have been empowered to develop learning materials in Rukigaon potato and sorghum farming.

A linkage has been established between potato growers, traders and market agency. The farmers are learning about direct marketing through ODL and blended learning.

Makerere University and the ODL Network, who are facilitating L3F in Uganda, have launched a website for L3F and local languages and dialects such as Rushika at www.l3fuganda.mak.ac.ug. Five farmers were trained in ICT and web management to support the farmers’ website.

Two manuals on Mobile-Based Learning and Self-Help Group formation have been developed under the L3F initiative.

Capacity building of nearly 1,000 farmers through mobile phone and blended learning is continuing.

COL facilitated a workshop in February 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss COL’s Three-Year Plan. Dr. Moses Tenywa and Robert Kaliisa of Makerere University attended the workshop.

Makerere University, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), Equity Bank, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and WARID participated in two workshops facilitated by COL in early March 2012. NAADS and MAAIF wanted to identify strategies for integrating L3F in the World Bank-supported Agricultural Technology and Agri-Business Advisory Services (ATTAS) project. Financial literacy was identified as an important area and the financial institutions agreed to be partners in strengthening the initiative.

In collaboration with the University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada, COL has developed a Learning Management System called LIVES (Learning through Interactive Voice Educational Systems). The goal is to provide communities with a learning tool based on voice mail using mobile phones. COL will be able to scale up its interventions because more than a thousand learners can be reached through this system, which can provide automated feedback and can be used to transmit voice mail in any language or dialect. LIVES will be deployed in Uganda.

Through the support of L3F and Makerere University, approximately 1,000 farmers have established a saving and credit society. L3F has helped to evolve Agricultural Innovations Systems Brokerage Association-Open Distance Learning Network (AGINSBA-ODLN), a resource organisation for mobile phone-based ODL and L3F. They have trained participants from Kenya and Rwanda in various forms of ODL. The Ministry of Agriculture in Rwanda has sought their support in building the capacity of the department’s staff.

Studies have shown that the productivity of potato, sorghum and honey have improved with the introduction of L3F and the farmers through their associations have been able to get better prices for the crops.

COL sponsored Mr. Daniel Ninsiima of Makerere University to attend the “ICT Training on Freedom Fone” organized by Farm Radio International in Arusha, Tanzania during May 2012.

Healthy Communities

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and
submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Seven Ugandans completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including six from Uganda, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. The second course was on Healthy Communities; seven Ugandans completed the course.

The winning scripts from the script writing competition were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam in May 2011. Eight representatives from Uganda attended the workshop. The “Guidelines for OER in Higher Education” was launched on 1 November 2011 during the UNESCO’s 36th General Conference in Paris.

Juliana Bbuye of Makerere University attended the OER workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Africa OER and Government Policy was held in Pretoria, South Africa in February 2012. Dr. William Bazeyo, Dr. Roy Mayega, Angela Nanyanzi and Prof. David M. Serwadda of Makerere University attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Josephine Olivia Ddunge of the Ministry of Education and Sports; Bruce Kisitu of Education and Career Network Ltd; Moses Tenywa of Makerere University and Elizabeth Gabona of the Ministry of Education and Sports and COL Focal Point.

Elizabeth Gabona, Focal Point for Uganda, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Substantial number of learners from Uganda participated in these courses:

- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
• One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
• Two learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Four learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
• One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2010,
• Two learners took the World Health Organization Writing Effective course in 2010,
• Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
• Two learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Uganda for 2012-2015 are:

• Establishing the Open University of Uganda,
• Reactivating national and regional ODL associations,
• Strengthening ODL supervisory desks in the Ministry of Education and Sports and the National Council for Higher Education,
• Supporting ODL for continuing professional development and non-formal education, and
• Encouraging innovative use of ICT in ODL.
ZAMBIA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Victor Muyatwa, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

With a population of about 13 million people, Zambia was recognised by the World Bank in 2010 as being one of the world’s fastest economically reforming countries. While Zambia makes considerable use of distance education to extend access to formal education, most public institutions are severely constrained by lack of finance and manpower. There is potential for open and distance learning (ODL) to be used to strengthen formal education by training primary teachers, extend access to secondary education and tertiary access, and contribute to skills development. Zambia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Zambia is actively participating in a number of key COL activities including COL’s flexible skills development initiative, the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA), “OER for Open Schools” and the UNICEF-COL Child Friendly Schools project. Partners in Zambia are also undergoing training under COL’s healthy communities initiative.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Weddina Nyangu of the Directorate of Distance Education (DODE), Ministry of Education was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Weddina Nyangu attended the AGM.

At the request of the Ministry of Education, Zambia, COL contracted the services of Justin Ellis to carry out an evaluation of the Zambia College of Distance Education (ZACODE) and submit recommendations on measures to be taken to redesign the operations of the college. The report was submitted to the Ministry of Education in December 2009. A follow-up was made to the Ministry of Education in January 2011.

Zambia is one of six countries which participated in the “Open Educational Resources (OER) for Open Schools” initiative led by COL. Zambia attended the Steering Committee meeting in Gaborone, in September 2009. The meeting focussed on the progress to date and made necessary adjustments and forward-looking strategies to ensure that outcomes would be fully achieved on time.
Country Management Committees were established and they met on a regular basis. ZACODE was included in the “OER for Open Schools” initiative. Evelyn Nonyonya was appointed Zambia’s Country Consultant in 2009.

Regular communication with the teams was conducted via Basecamp with consultants providing online support.

Mathews Musonda and Newton Ng’ambi of ZACODE attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation/COL Open Resources for Open Schools Workshop was held in Lusaka from 31 January-9 February 2011. The purpose of the workshop was to complete draft units in Commerce and Physical Sciences and a minimum of eight units for Mathematics (print-based OER only). The participants were 15 Master Teachers. A review workshop on the OER was held in July 2011 in Lusaka.

The print-based OER workshop aimed at assisting Master Teachers to finalise their OER took place in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2011. Fourteen people attended from ZACODE, Luanshya Girls, Luanshya Boys, Nkulumashiba Basic and Kamatipa Basic.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OER was held in Delhi in November 2009. Weddina Nyangu of DODE, Ministry of Education, Zambia and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

The Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) held a five-day research and publications capacity building workshop in Botswana in March 2010. The delegates included members of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa from Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Supported by COL, the BBC and the Directorate of Distance Education, Zambia, 18 pupils and nine teachers from Kanyonyo Basic School, Western Province, Kabulonga Basic School, Lusaka, and Mepezemi Park Basic School, Eastern Province took part in a three-day journalism training workshop in 2009. School Report News Day in Zambia became a virtual cultural exchange with students in Lusaka interviewing pupils from the UK about school life – and teachers from Japan about body slapping!

COL co-facilitated a two-day workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010. Representatives from Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia attended the workshop. Gladys Sakala and Abel Simbeya of Educational Broadcasting Services, Zambia were trained to draft strategic plans for integrating multimedia in their open schools. The workshop is also the first step in supporting Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia to develop digital content over the next two years.

COL sponsored a workshop, hosted by the National Institute of Distance Education, in Maputo, Mozambique in March 2010 to review the components of the Quality Assurance toolkits open schools. Ten participants from seven countries including Rhonda Mweeta of the Directorate of Open and Distance Education, Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was the first workshop of its kind to be held for open schools in Africa. Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop. Zambia was represented by Rhonda Mweeta of the Directorate of Open and Distance Education and Enid Mainza Habweza of the Zambia College of Open and Distance Education.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.
A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Kochi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Weddina Nyangu of DODE, Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

The Directorate of Open and Distance Education, Ministry of Education participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a Gender-Sensitive information and communication technology (ICT) Strategy for Open Schooling Workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Inutu Akushanga Kalumiana of DODE, Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, Martha Sitali of the Ministry of Education gave a presentation on “What difference did this initiative bring to the ZACODE staff’s work ethic and professional development?"

Ms. Sitali attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, Steering Committee Meeting, OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools and the launch.

Teacher Education

COL has provided a grant in support of the improvement in primary teacher programmes in Zambia and Uganda. The objectives are to broaden awareness and understanding of Teacher Education for Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) resources at a range of primary teacher training institutions and support rurally-based colleges to explore the inclusion of TESSA resources in their programmes.

An OER workshop (focused on distance teacher education) with 10 teacher training colleges was held in Lusaka, Zambia in November 2009. The objective of the workshop was to learn how to develop ODL modules with a focus on how to use existing materials and how to integrate OER (such as TESSA). This workshop was jointly organised with VVOB (a Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance).

Three COL-TESSA workshops were held in Zambia in December 2010: in Lusaka, at Malcolm Moffat College of Education in Serenje and at Kitwe College of Education in Kitwe. Eighty-five teacher educators from nine colleges participated in the workshops.

COL-TESSA worked with the University of Zambia to disseminate the TESSA OER materials to 12 teacher training institutions. Each college received three copies of the six TESSA folders of Teacher Education Guidance: TESSA Handbooks, and Key Resources; Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Social Studies/Art and Life Skills.

Zambia is one of 10 countries participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The CFS Project Point Persons in Zambia are Yuko Oki, Programme Officer, Education, UNICEF Zambia and Lucksion Malambo, Ministry of Education. The partners in Zambia are the Ministry of Education, UNICEF Zambia and National In-Service Teachers’ College. A Baseline Study was conducted at the outset of the project.
A CFS curriculum and standards review workshop was held in April 2011 for 25 teacher educators from the Southern, Eastern, Copperbelt, Northern, Central, Luapula, Western, Lusaka and Northwestern provinces.

The Guidelines and Templates for Developing/Adapting Materials and the Final Draft set of Child-Friendly Schools – Standards and Indicators for Teachers, which are developed by COL, are currently being used by all participating countries.

A meeting on the development of the content outline of the supplementary training manual for teacher educators was held in Lusaka in February 2012. The local consultant Mr. Tambulukani, Luckson Mlambo of the Ministry of Education and five other persons participated in the meeting.

In April 2012, the Supplementary Manual was completed. A Training of Trainers workshop would be held in August 2012.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL was invited by the Department of Vocational Education and Training in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training to work with them on developing a national ODL technical and vocational education and training (TVET) policy. COL contracted George Herd to conduct a comprehensive situational analysis of the use of ODL in TVET in Zambia. The consultancy contributed to the development of a national strategic framework and policy guidelines for ODL in TVET in Zambia.

A national stakeholders meeting was held on 31 May 2010 at which the role of ODL in TVET was highlighted. Approximately 50 participants from various ministries and institutions attended the meeting.

Following the application of a readiness evaluation, Technical & Vocational Teachers College (TVTC) and the Zambia Institute of Business Studies and Industrial Placement (ZIBIP) have been selected to join the 11 key institutions for flexible development activities. The institutions have entered into a long-term partnership with COL to build the capacity across 4 dimensions for flexible and blended learning in TVET. They are strengthening strategic planning, organisational structures, ICT infrastructure and pedagogy. COL is providing a range of capacity building activities including workshops, institutional visits, online courses and an online community of practice. 48 people from TVTC and 34 from ZIBSIP have participated in the various capacity building activities.

The Principal of TVTC, Pascal Chewe, and the Training Manager of ZIBIP, Francis Bwalya, attended the COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Kerala, India in November 2010. They will develop institutional policies and develop staff capacity to introduce ICT into TVET teaching and administration.

Pascal Chewe, Pascal Ngosa, Victor Mulenga and Sangster Jere from the Technical and Vocational Teachers College (TVTC) worked with a COL consultant and colleagues from the Kenya Technical Teachers College to develop materials for ICT in TVET teaching.

COL co-facilitated a Flexible Skills Development partners meeting in May 2011 in Kampala, Uganda with Principals and Champions of nine key institutions from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia. The participants carried out a partners’ evaluation of activities, outputs and outcomes of mutual collaboration over the past one year. Pascale Chewe, Sangster Jere of TVET and Francis Bwalya of ZIBIP attended the workshop.

COL sponsored Dorothy Siame of Zambia to the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference on Entrepreneurial Polytechnic in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2010.
COL and UNESCO co-hosted a one-day ICT in TVET Summit as a pre-conference workshop at the eLearning Africa Conference in Zambia in May 2010. COL sponsored Sangster M. Jere of TVTC to the Summit and eLearning Africa Conference.

COL facilitated a workshop for institutional heads from Zambia in capacity Building for the Flexible Skills Development Initiative in Lusaka, Zambia in June 2010. Twenty-eight participants in senior managerial positions at TVET institutions responsible to the Ministry of Science, Technical and Vocational Training attended the workshop.

COL sponsored Elidah Silungwe Simwanda of Luanshya Technical & Business College to the CAPA conference in November/December 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. Elidah S. Simwanda also attended the COL Flexible Skills Development Workshop in November 2010 in Maseru, Lesotho. The workshop was held during the CAPA conference to provide an opportunity for interested CAPA conference delegates to learn more about the Flexible Skills Development and to discuss the issues involved in introducing flexible and distance learning methodologies into their institutions.

COL engaged Nicholas Kimolo of Futuristic Ltd. Kenya to carry out an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Assessment on 10 institutions including the TVTC and Zambia Institute of Business (ZIBIP) to obtain a better understanding of their short-term and medium-term ICT plans and strategies. The report was submitted in March 2011.

COL co-facilitated a workshop to introduce the COL Flexible Skills Development activity to members of the CAPA membership and advocate for technology-enhanced ODL in skills development in Kampala, Uganda in May 2011. Francis Bwalya of ZIBIP, Sangster Jere of TVTC and Kasanda Sayila of Kabwe Trades attended the workshop.

COL organised a five-day workshop at the Masai Technical Training Institute, Kenya in November 2011 for TVET institutions from six African countries in the development of audio and video learning materials for TVET. Nsofwa Paul and Moses Tembo of TVTC and Moonga Kabatana of ZIBIP attended the workshop.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are 20 members from Zambia in the Network.

COL facilitated a three-day Flexible Skills Development Partners Meeting in May 2012 to review the activities of 2011/2012, present outputs and outcomes, and plan for the coming year, 2012/2013. Pascale Chewe and Sangster Jere, FSD Champion of the Technical & Vocational Teachers College and Francis Bwalya and Makupe Mubanga of ZIBIP attended the meeting.

COL sponsored Pascale Chewe, Sangster Jere, Francis Bwalya and Makupe Mubanga to the CAPA Conference in Kenya on 28 April 2012.

**Healthy Communities**

Two 10-week online training courses in scriptwriting skills were supported by COL and developed and run by Farm Radio International in 2009 and 2010. More than 200 broadcasters and rural health and agricultural development workers from across Sub-Saharan Africa completed one of the two courses and submitted a script to the associated competition, which was sponsored by COL, UNESCO, FAO, CTA and other agencies.

The first course focused on agricultural innovation. Three Zambians completed the course. Eighty-two scripts, including one from Zambia, were received for the African-Wide Scriptwriting Competition on Smallholder Farmer Innovation. The second course was on Healthy Communities; four Zambians
completed the course. Filius Chalo Jere’s script about “AIDS support program gives positive people a new lease of life” was one of the winners.

The winning scripts from the script writing competition were published in French and English and distributed by Farm Radio International to several hundred radio organisations across Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Integrating eLearning**

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Professor Mutale Mike Musonda of Copperbelt University attended the first workshop in April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The fifth workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2011. Mtonga Chola of the Zambia College of Distance Education, Ministry of Education, Dickson Mwansa of Zambia Open University and Anne L. Sikwibele of Mulungushi University attended the workshop.

A TVET instructional design workshop was held in Luanshya, Zambia in April 2011. Three participants from Technical and Vocational Teachers’ College Management Board and two from the Zambia Institute of Business Studies attended the workshop.

Lemmy Kangwa of the National In-Service Teachers’ College and Chishimba Nkosha of the University of Zambia attended the OER Workshop in Mozambique in August 2011.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Francis Bwalya of Zambia Institute of Business; Pascal Chewe of the Technical Vocational Teachers College, George L. Nahonge and Weddina Nyangu of the Directorate of Open and Distance Education (DODE), Ministry of Education.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Africa and the Mediterranean) was held in Mauritius in May 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Victor Muyatwa, Focal Point for Zambia, was invited to the meeting.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the World Bank Report Writing course in 2010,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2010, and
- One learner took the World Bank Report Writing course in 2011.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Zambia for 2012-2015 are:

- Quality assurance,
- Teacher development,
- Open and alternate schooling,
- eLearning for education sector development, and
- Learning and skills for livelihoods.
ASIA

Bangladesh | Brunei Darussalam | India | Malaysia
Maldives | Pakistan | Singapore | Sri Lanka
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

The Asian Commonwealth comprises of eight countries: three in Southeast Asia and five in South Asia. Three of them (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) are among the most highly populated countries in the world.

Open and distance learning (ODL) has proliferated in Asia in recent years. Several of COL’s most important partners are located in the region, promoting south-south collaboration and harnessing the potential of information and communication technology (ICT) to expand learning for development.

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA (CEMCA)

CEMCA is COL’s regional agency in Asia. Based in New Delhi, India, CEMCA plans and implements activities in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. CEMCA is working on strengthening collaboration with partners in Brunei Darussalam, Pakistan and Singapore. CEMCA develops regional expertise in Open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technologies (ICT) in the Asian region and organises capacity building to respond to identified needs. It is COL’s only unit outside of its Vancouver, Canada headquarters.

COL’s regional work in Asia includes the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), open schooling, the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme, capacity building in multimedia content development, support for the expansion of community learning programmes, promotion of open educational resources (OER) and gender equality. Here are some regional activities facilitated by COL and CEMCA in Asia during 2009-2012. Specific activities in each country are outlined in the individual Country Reports that follow.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Brunei and Maldives are members of VUSSC, a collaborative network of 32 small states that is working to develop and share learning materials at the post-secondary level.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore co-hosted the 10th VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting from 11-16 November 2011 and the 10th VUSSC International Training and Materials Development Meeting in Master of Education: Educational Leadership at the National Institute of Education (NIE) from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Open Schooling

COL held a workshop on copyright and open educational resources (OER) in Delhi in November, 2009. Representatives from 10 open schools and education agencies in India attended the workshop, along with
participants from more than 20 countries, where they also held the inaugural meeting of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA).

A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) members in the Asian Region in Nainital in June 2010.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. In conjunction with the COMOSA AGM, COL hosted an eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop and an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools where a draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives from Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka attended the AGM, workshops and launch.

Higher Education

COL’s Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA (CEMBA/MPA) programme, which provides professional development for working adults, is offered by several open universities in Asia including:

- Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Pakistan
- Bangladesh Open University (BOU)
- Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)
- Wawasan Open University (WOU), Malaysia.

COL hosted a case method workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September/October 2009 for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four people participated in the workshop.

The Academic Board and the Executive Governing Board of CEMBA/MPA both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia.

CEMCA supported a session on Digital Library Quality at the 3rd International Conference on Digital Libraries in Delhi, India in February 2010. CEMCA presented a lead paper on quality assurance in multimedia learning materials (QAMLM) guidelines. The session was attended by about 100 participants and copies of QAMLM guidelines were distributed to them. CEMCA sponsored delegates from India and Pakistan to the conference.

CEMCA conducted a multimedia content development workshop for 40 participants at the Bangladesh Open University from February 5-9, 2011. Participants were trained through all technical aspects of content creation from installing the necessary software to adding multi-media supports to content.

COL and WOU hosted the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Penang from 29 November-1 December 2011.

LIVELIHOODS AND HEALTH

Healthy Communities

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in Bangalore, India in February 2010. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They were made aware of community radio in the Asia Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills. There were discussions and sharing of best practice on using community
media as part of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security, and advocacy for gender equity. The Bangalore Declaration was passed by the AMARC Asia Pacific general assembly. It is a collective statement of participants’ beliefs and commitments including the use of community radio as a tool for non-formal education and food security.

COL hosted a Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town, South Africa in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth, including Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

In December 2011, Maraa (a media and arts collective based in Bangalore, India) and the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community worked together with AMARC to plan and run a three-day residential workshop on developing participatory learning programmes for 14 community broadcasting trainers and managers from Asia Pacific at a regional training forum held in Bangkok, Thailand.

**Integrating eLearning**

In association with the Asian Media Information and Communication (AMIC) Centre Singapore, CEMCA supported the participation of experts from Commonwealth Asian countries in July 2010 at New Delhi.

CEMCA organised the post-conference workshop on Community Media and Convergent Media in association with AMIC Singapore and Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Malaysia in New Delhi in February 2010. Representatives from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka were sponsored by CEMCA.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Regional Policy Forum for Asia/Pacific OER and Government Policy was held in Bangkok, Thailand in April 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

**GENDER**

Gender equality is a cross-cutting corporate goal for COL. The advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment are central to COL’s agenda of Learning for Development. COL is working to ensure it is a model organisation that mainstreams gender in all its processes and at all levels. COL’s Gender micro-site provides Commonwealth countries with a one-stop, comprehensive platform to access print and electronic resources on gender and ODL and ICT.

COL led development of the Gender-Class Empowerment Index, which is based on political, economic, psychological and entrepreneurial characteristics. A study has been conducted in India based on this Index. COL also commissioned a longitudinal assessment of gender in its Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme in Tamil Nadu, India.

**REGIONAL PRESENCE**

COL maintains strong relationships with many stakeholders in Asia, including member governments, partner institutions, donors and individuals. COL’s Honorary Advisors, a network of eminent ODL professionals, includes two representatives from Asia. The region is also represented by a COL Chair,
Professor Chandra Gunawardene of the Open University of Sri Lanka, and a network of individuals, selected by the eight member Governments, who liaise directly with COL as Focal Points. COL creates specific country action plans and country reports to ensure the region’s needs are addressed.

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) took place in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years. Focal Points share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. The key issues identified at the Asia Focal Points Meeting were:

- Lifelong learning,
- Skills development,
- Teacher training in eLearning,
- Open schooling,
- Dual mode provision for universities,
- Mutual recognition of qualifications/credit transfers, and
- Community health and hygiene.

REGIONAL BROCHURES

COL has regional brochures that summarise its activities in each of the four regions of the Commonwealth. These can be found on COL’s website at www.col.org/regional.
BACKGROUND

Bangladesh has a largely rural population of about 162 million. COL has worked with Bangladesh over the years on numerous projects aimed at advancing open and distance learning in the country. The Bangladesh Government has declared “Digital Bangladesh by 2021”, which includes all secondary education institutions being online by 2013 and primary education by 2015. Bangladesh is a regular contributor to COL’s budget and participates in regional activities, many of them led by COL’s regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA).

SUMMARY

Professor Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid, Vice Chancellor of the Bangladesh Open University, is a member of the CEMCA Advisory Council.

Bangladesh continues to be centrally involved in many COL initiatives and activities, including Open Schooling and Higher Education, Skills Development and Healthy Communities, with Bangladesh Open University (BOU) and Rupantar, a development communication organisation working with traditional cultural media, in important partnership roles.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009, and the COMOSA Constitution was signed by 22 partners. Professor Dr. Qazi Mohd. Galib Ahsan of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) was invited to the inaugural meeting.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education. Professor Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid of BOU attended the AGM.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four areas (Curriculum and Course Development, Integration of the Vocational Education with the academic/general education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Prof. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid of BOU attended the workshop.
COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch.

Dr. R.I.M. Aminur of BOU attended the three events above, namely the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop and the launch.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

BOU participated in three open schooling research studies:
- Online Learning Success Variations/Factors
- Integrating Vocational and Academic Education
- Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

COL sponsored a Gender-Sensitive Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for Open Schooling Workshop in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Meherun Nesa of BOU attended the workshop.

A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for COMOSA members in the Asian Region in Nainital, India in June 2010. Professor Dr. Md. S. Alam and Professor Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid of BOU attended the workshop.

Md. Anwarul Islam of Bangladesh attended a workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education in Botswana in July 2011.

COL is now working with the Bangladesh Open University’s Open School to help it expand its reach to women and girls.

**Higher Education**

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and several non-Commonwealth countries attended the roundtable, including Professor Dr. Md. S. Alam of BOU.


CEMCA conducted a multi-media content development workshop for 33 participants from Bangladesh and eight from other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries at Bangladesh Open University in February 2011.
COL sponsored Mohammed Rezwan of Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha to the Cambridge International Conference on Open, Distance and e-Learning in September 2011.

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme (CEMBA/MPA) is offered by the Bangladesh Open University. A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September-October 2009 for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants attended, including representatives of BOU, the University of Dhaka, the University of Chittagong, and the Islamic University.

The Academic Board (AB) and the Executive Governing Board (EGB) of CEMBA/MPA both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Professor Dr. A.T.M. Tofazzel Hossain and Professor R.I.M. Aminur Rashid of BOU attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively. Professor Hossain is a member of the Academic Board and Professor Dr. Rashid is a member of the Executive Governing Board.

An online workshop on OER for Revision was conducted for CEMBA/MPA partners in April 2012. Mostafa Azad Kamal, Mohammad Zahir Raihan, Dr. Md. Serazul Islam and Md. Asaf-Ud-Doula of BOU were nominated for the programme.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

A four-day workshop was held in Khulna, Bangladesh in December 2009 in partnership with Rupantar. Swapan Guha, co-CEO Rupantar; Rafiqul Islam Khokan, co-CEO Rupantar; Liaqat Ali, Editor and Publisher of Pubanchal newspaper; Pallabi Dey, CCD Rajshahi; Saifuddin Sobuj, Rupantar; Sabrina Sharmin, RDRS, Rangpur and 16 participants from civil society organisations who have been granted an initial letter of intent for grant of community radio attended the workshop. The objective of the workshop was to develop Rupantar as a key facilitator for community radio stations in Bangladesh and to encourage potential community radios to develop a content bank in preparation for launching their stations.

CEMCA co-sponsored a four-day workshop in September 2010 at the Jadavpur University Community Radio Station (JUCR), Kolkata, India for 14 participants from Bangladesh. They included partners from NGOs and civil society organisations who are in the process of setting up community radio stations. The workshop gave firsthand exposure to practical aspects like studio design, location and orientation of antennae.

CEMCA facilitated a workshop on Community Radio Station Management and Sustainability Measures for Functional Stations at Radio Mahananda 98.8 FM, Chapai-Nawabgonj, Bangladesh from 28-30 March 2012. Twenty-one participants from nine community radio stations attended the workshop, which was jointly organised by Rupantar and Radio Mahananda 98.8 FM.

In collaboration with Dhaka Ahsania Mission, COL is developing 5 new skills training courses for non-formal skills development. A needs analysis was carried out to identify the most appropriate subjects. The course materials are in print and video and will be broadcast on television. The courses will be offered through different NGOs in the country.

Healthy Communities

Rupantar is a key partner in developing capacity in 15 agencies that are establishing community radio stations and services. COL and Rupantar signed a memorandum of understanding in July 2010 to establish a formal basis of cooperation to promote culturally appropriate development communication and open and distance learning with a focus on community-based non-formal education and learning for healthy communities and sustainable livelihoods.
COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the side lines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference (20-23 February 2010, Bangalore, India). Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned new awareness of community radio in Asia-Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills in using community media as part of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity. COL sponsored Mr. Rafiqul Islam Khokan of Rupantar to the workshop and conference.

A training course on Theatre for Community Development was conducted in March 2011 at Rupantar Conference Hall, Khulna. Fourteen executive directors, directors and other decision makers attended on the first day. Twenty-nine participants from 15 organisations participated in the second phase over seven days.

COL facilitated a five-day workshop in programme development skills in December 2010. The workshop was divided in two parts:

1) Training of trainers from Rupantar
2) Training of multi-sectoral groups from four communities in community learning programme development skills, led by the Rupantar facilitators. The participants included representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, non-governmental organisations, Rupantar and community media. A guidebook based on the workshop process was produced and distributed to the participants after the workshop.

Following the workshop, 32 people (eight from each of the four participating organisations) developed community learning programmes on health from four districts: Kurigram, Barguna, Chapai Nawabganj and Bagerhat under the theme of Maternal Healthcare. One of the organisations, Agriculture Information Service of the Ministry of Agriculture, is developing a community learning programme on boro paddy about rice farming in saline areas in Bangladesh.

Rupantar participated in the Healthy Community partners’ workshop to review and plan COL’s programming, held immediately prior to the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Opening Learning (PCF6) in Kochi in November 2011, and also participated in the COL-UNESCO Seminar, Learning from Community Media, as well as PCF6’s Community Development theme. Mr. Rafiqul Islam Khokan and Dr. Rezaul Haque of Rupantar attended.

CEMCA is working with the Development Research Network (D.Net) in Bangladesh to help local organisations use open and distance learning (ODL) technologies for health. A four-day introductory workshop on Learning4Content-WikiEducator and CEMCA’s EasyNow platform, organised by DNet with technical and financial support from CEMCA, was held in Dhaka in December 2009. Fourteen participants were trained in the use of WikiEducator and EasyNow to create content on local health practices and indigenous knowledge. (www.wikieducator.org/L4C_Dhaka)

CEMCA conducted a follow-up multimedia content development workshop on health-related issues using indigenous knowledge and practices using Easy Now in December 2010 in Dhaka. Participants created a digital resource on medicinal herbs. http://www.ik.org.bd/?page_id=42

A workshop on Using Internet to Deliver Audio Content was held in June 2011 at Caritas Development Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Representatives from the government, community groups and media attended the workshop.

Sumon Frances Gomes of Rupantar attended COL’s Healthy Communities partners’ workshop in Cape Town, in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and
approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

CEMCA facilitated a workshop on Developing e-content at Rupantar Training Centre from 31 March-2 April 2012. The workshop introduced participants to the Easy Now Package and Wikipedia where they were introduced to creating content in multiple media. Twenty participants from Amader Gram, Khulnanews.com, UNICEF-Khula, Agriculture Information Service, Bangladesh TV, Radio Chilmori and Rupantar attended the workshop.

**Integrating eLearning**

COL and UNESCO hosted two open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops. These workshops form part of a series organised within a COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity”. The first workshop was for Heads of Commonwealth Universities on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The intent of the workshop was to alert university leaders to the potential of OER to facilitate the expansion of quality higher education and to receive feedback from them on policy issues relating to the use of OER in universities. Professor Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid of BOU attended the workshop.

CEMCA, in collaboration with Wawasan Open University, conducted a four-day “Train the Trainers” workshop on Advanced EasyNow in Penang, Malaysia in June 2010. Farha Sharmin and Naimul Haque Joarder of D.Net attended the workshop.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Dr. Zobaido Akhter, Md. Anwarul Islam, Sharker Md. Numan, Professor Dr. R.I.M. Aminur Rashid and Sabina Yeasmin of BOU; Abu Nasar Md. A. Rahman of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University; and Dr. Rezaul Haque and Rafiqul Islam Khokan of Rupantar.

Professor Aminul Islam of Bangladesh was made an Honorary Fellow of the Commonwealth of Learning at PCF6 in Kochi, India.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Learners from Bangladesh were involved as follows:

- Two learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Three learners took the World Bank Writing Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Seven learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2010,
- One learner took the World Bank Writing Effective course in 2010,
- Two learners took the World Bank Writing Effective course in 2011,
- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course 2011, and
- Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Bangladesh for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing teachers’ capacity to create subject-based content for use in a multimedia classroom,
- Bringing general education under the ODL umbrella,
- Content development under PPP model,
- Awareness campaign of ICT in education, and
- Centralised multimedia content development and online broadcasting.
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

COL Focal Point: Mr. Adinin Md. Salleh, Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council

BACKGROUND

When COL was established in 1987, His Majesty, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, made an important contribution that helped put the fledging organisation on its feet. COL remains grateful for this generosity. The first Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning was held in Brunei Darussalam in March 1999.

Mr. Abdul Khalid Haji Mahmood of the Ministry of Education was the Focal Point for COL from 2009-2011.

SUMMARY

Brunei participates in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and the Quality Assurance for the development of Multi-media Learning Materials Guidelines. A new policy for Open and Distance Education for Brunei Darussalam has been endorsed by the Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council (BDNAC).

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Brunei Darussalam is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.
COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Haji Ashri bin Haji Ahmad of the Ministry of Education was unable to attend the meeting but was kept informed on the progress.

The Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore in November 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011. Dr. Rosmawijah Jawawi (Team Leader from Brunei Darussalam) attended the meeting and workshop.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Adinin Md. Salleh, Brunei’s Focal Point for COL, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Brunei Darussalam for 2012-2015 are:

- Providing a next generation, reliable and secure network for all government schools and the Ministry of Education,
- Providing dedicated, real time and on-site support services for school and Ministry of Education computing equipment,
- Enabling the Ministry of Education to access management information for real time, evidence-based decision making and support for district managers, schools and communities,
- Deeply integrating information and communication technology (ICT) into every aspect of the New Educational System for the 21st Century (SPN21) and future curriculum in every subject area,
- Enable authentic and engaging learning through 21st century pedagogies,
- Uniquely blending Malay Islamic Monarchy (MIB) concept and next generation ICT skills and competencies within the curriculum, and
- Producing ICT confident and capable global citizens grounded in Bruneian values and beliefs.
India

COL Focal Point: Shri Anant Kumar Singh, Ministry of Human Resource Development

BACKGROUND

India is the largest Commonwealth country with a population of about 1.2 billion. COL’s most extensive country programme is in India. This supports development in India and also facilitates knowledge transfer to other Commonwealth countries.

COL’s regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), is based in New Delhi. CEMCA develops regional expertise in open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technologies (ICT) in the Asian region and organises capacity building to respond to identified needs. It is COL’s only unit outside of its Vancouver, Canada headquarters. In addition to acting as COL’s regional office in India, CEMCA is active with initiatives in the other Commonwealth countries in Asia (Bangladesh, Malaysia, Maldives and Sri Lanka).

As a major donor, India has a seat on the COL Board of Governors. Shri Ashok Thakur, the Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resources Development is the current member of Board and the Executive Committee.

As host country of CEMCA, the Government of India nominates one official, currently Shri Amit Khare, as a member of the Advisory Council of CEMCA. Dr. B.S. Bhatia and Dr. Sitanshu Jena, Chairman of the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), are also members of the Advisory Council. Professor V.N. R. Pillai, former Vice Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open School, was a Member of the Council from 2010-2011.

CEMCA and UNESCO recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly work on education-related programmes in establishing community media in South Asian regions.

Professor Asha Kanwar of India was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of COL in June 2012 and previously served as Vice-President and as an Education Specialist. Other Indian staff include Dr. Venkataraman Balaji, Director, Technology & Knowledge Management, Dr. K. Balasubramanian, Education Specialist, Agriculture and Livelihoods, Dr. Madhulika Kaushik, Education Specialist, Higher Education and Dr. Sanjaya Mishra, Director, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia.

Dr. D. Paliwal and Shri Amit Khare of the Ministry of Human Resource Development were the Focal Points for COL from 2006-2010 and 2010-2012 respectively. Dr. (Mrs.) Kondapallil Rama, the former Deputy Adviser, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, was an Honorary COL Advisor from 2009-2012.
SUMMARY

COL’s activities in India span both programme sectors and almost all programme initiatives. COL and CEMCA have partnerships with many Indian institutions and community groups. In the Education sector, there has been extensive activity in open schooling and higher education. In the Livelihoods and Health sector, COL is working with Indian partners in skills development, integrating eLearning and healthy communities. COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme was launched in India in 2004 and continues to grow, both geographically and in its impact.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. The Declaration promulgating the COMOSA Constitution was signed on 24 November 2009 by 22 partners including 13 representatives from open schools.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years were identified as Research, Gender and Vocational and Technical Education.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November, 2009. Representatives from 10 open schools and education agencies in India attended the workshop, along with participants from more than 20 countries.

COL commissioned Dr. Sanjaya Mishra to develop an action plan for the creation of a capacity building cell within the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). The action plan was submitted in April 2010.

A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for COMOSA members in the Asian region in Nainital in June 2010. Twenty participants from Kerala, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Mysore, J&K, Haryana, Rajasthan, Assam, Chennai and Chhattisgarh also attended the workshop.

A workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education was held in Botswana in July 2011. Dr. Mamta Srivastava of India attended the workshop.

COL initiated and implemented a three-day awareness and training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation in August 2010 at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). Twenty-eight participants from 12 countries attended the workshop, the first of its kind to be held amongst open schools. India was represented by Sitansu Sekhar Jena, Dr. Sushmita Mitra and S.K. Misra of NIOS.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Representatives from a number of Indian open schools and education agencies attended the workshop. NIOS participated in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling in 2011.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks. Copies of the Toolkits were made available to delegates from many Indian institutions that were present at the Forum.

Thothadri Rajagopal’s Study on State Open Schools in India, commissioned by COL, was completed.
The Open Schools Needs Analysis was completed in August 2009. Assam State Open School (ASOS), Guwahati and NIOS were identified as partner institutions. The course identified was on Education. The Academic Programme Experts Committee Meeting was organised, and a syllabus was drafted by ASOS in October 2009.

The Course Development workshop to train content writers on self-instructional materials was held in February 2010 at ASOS. The syllabus with eight core modules and four optional modules as per NIOS/ASOS was drawn up. At the end of the workshop participants were confident on how to write the modules.

The Curriculum Design Committee designed a syllabus based on the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (conventional syllabus), incorporating the recently passed Right to Education Act and other contemporary trends and changes in education. A capacity building workshop was organised. There will be two sets of materials for Education in English and Assamese.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Representatives from NIOS and several other open schools and universities in India attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL contracted Liz Bowen-Clewey and Terry Neal of the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand to conduct a three-day workshop on the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at NIOS and Indian open state schools in Delhi from 22-24 February 2012. Thirty-four participants from NIOS, other Indian state open schools, NIOS partners and various government agencies attended the workshop, where they were introduced to the principles, processes and tools of RPL.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Representatives from NIOS and several other open schools and universities in India attended the workshop and launch.

CEMCA, in collaboration with the Theerthankar Mahaveer University (TMU), organised a workshop in March 2012 on capacity building for traditional universities in ODL through e-content development. Thirty participants from the Faculties of Law, Management, Mass Communications, Languages, Science, Mathematics, Education and Humanities of TMU participated in the workshop.

CEMCA and the Gujarat State Open School organised a two-day workshop about the fundamentals of Self-Learning Instructional Material (SLIM) Development in Gujarati in April 2012. Twenty-one senior textbook writers participated in the training of trainers workshop to develop content outlines in Gujarati in seven subject areas.

**Teacher Education**

The first workshop for Master Trainers from Mumbai Campuses of the SDNT Women’s University on Integrating ICT in Higher Education was held from 5-9 September 2011 at the Department of Educational Technology, Juhu Campus. Twenty-four people attended the workshop.

The second workshop was held from 13-19 September at the College of Education, Pune Campus. Representatives from the Department of Fine Arts, SNDT College of Home Science, SNDT College of Arts, Social Science and Commerce, SNDT College of Education, the Department of Education, the Department of Geography and Sinhgadh College of Education attended the workshop.
Higher Education

COL sponsored Dr. Satya Sundar Sethy of IGNOU to a conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009.

IGNOU signed an Agreement with COL in March 2009 to offer COL’s post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting. The Agreement is valid for four years with an option to renew at the end of 2011 for another two years. IGNOU is currently in the process of adapting the materials to its own requirements.

Seven video programmes were recorded during the Commonwealth Education Ministers Conference in Malaysia in 2009 on the theme of promoting “Respect and Understanding”. Other programmes in this theme were recorded with Professor Amartya Sen in Delhi and Shantiniketan and with the Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma in Delhi.

COL’s Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) is being implemented in three State Open Universities (YCMOU, Nasik; Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University (VMOU), Kota and Uttarakhand Open University (UOU), Uttarakhand) and one private open learning higher education institution (Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning, Pune).

COL Vice President (now President and C.E.O.) Professor Asha Kanwar delivered the valedictory address at the Symbiosis International Conference on ODL in Pune on 23 February 2011. The conference was organised by the Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning. The Vice President also delivered an inaugural speech on OER at the University of Mumbai in February 2011.

COL supported seven representatives from Indian open universities and higher education agencies at the COL National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) workshop on Quality Assurance in Dual Mode Institutions in Bangalore in March 2011 prior to the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Conference. Then COL President Sir John Daniel delivered the keynote and steered the workshop deliberations on the COL RIM model. IGNOU was represented by Pro Vice Chancellor, Dr. Lata Pillai. COL’s Quality Assurance Toolkit in Higher Education was made available to the participants.

Sir John Daniel delivered the keynote address at the International Conference on Open and Distance Learning in Global Environment, Issues and Challenges at Karnataka State Open University in September 2011.

COL facilitated capacity building training which was held in November 2011 for National Law University, Jodhpur to enable them to begin dual mode provision for law programmes at the Diploma and Degree level. Thirty participants from the Departments of Law, School of Insurance Studies, Physics, Management, History, Psychology, Chemistry, Economics and Policy Science attended the training.

A Leadership training workshop for Vice Chancellors was held at Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode in November 2011. Representatives from 11 open universities attended the workshop.

An OER-based course on Business Ethics is being developed in collaboration with Amrita Institute on Management, Coimbatore. It will be freely available as OER.

An Experts’ Committee Meeting for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Communication and Media Studies (PGDCMS) was held in February 2010. Two international experts and six experts from Delhi and other parts of India participated in the meeting. The syllabus has been shaped. The need for a Post-Graduate Diploma programme in Community Media and the Areas of Cooperation are under consideration by IGNOU.

The Vice Chancellor of UOU has agreed to develop an e-Content course. The curriculum has been developed.
CEMCA and UOU signed a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2010. The two parties agreed to identify avenues for collaboration, including the development of a multimedia course on information and knowledge delivery and capacity building.

CEMCA organised a workshop at UOU in March 2012 to develop e-content for university courses. Along with senior management of UOU, more than 36 staff and invited participants attended the workshop.

The quality assurance in multimedia learning materials (QAMLM) guidelines Version 1.0 were disseminated to the Ministry of Higher Education (Malaysia), and Madurai Kamaraj University and the Energy Resources Institute (TERI) of India.

CEMCA organised an International Base Camp on Quality Assurance of Multimedia Learning Materials in collaboration with Madurai Kamaraj University in February 2010. The focus was on testing the acceptability of the QAMLM Version 1.0 and obtaining feedback on the usefulness and usability of the materials to different user contexts. Over 30 participants from 15 institutions contributed on Basecamp.

CEMCA supported one session on Digital Library Quality at the 3rd International Conference on Digital Libraries in Delhi in February 2010. CEMCA and Ms. Sucheta Phadke, one of the QAMLM Core Group Members, presented a lead paper on QAMLM. The session was attended by about 100 participants and copies of QAMLM guidelines were distributed to them. CEMCA sponsored Dr. Jagdish Arora of INFLIBNET Centre, Professor A.R.D. Prasad of the Indian Statistical Institute, Sucheta Phadke of the ILFS Education and Technology Services Ltd., and Dr. Neela Jagghanathan, former Chief Librarian of IGNOU, to the conference.

CEMCA organised a joint-workshop on QAMLM with representatives of 17 educational media research centres (University Grants Commission) and seven State Institutions of Educational Technology (SIET) in Delhi in March 2010. This was followed by separate workshops with educational media research centres and SIET in Pune in October 2010.

CEMCA conducted a multimedia content development workshop for 40 participants including Dr. Aniban Ghosh of Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), Professor K.K. Pande of Teerthanker Mahaveer University and Dr. Manan Kumar Mandal of NSOU at the Bangladesh Open University in February 2011. Participants were trained in technical aspects of content creation from installing the necessary software to adding multimedia support to content.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

The Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative has been launched in three states in India: Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra. The partners in the project, VIDYAL, Arulandar College, Centre for Environment Education (CEE) and Mandeshi Foundation, are working with IFFCO-Kisan Sanchar Ltd (a mobile service company) and providing mobile phone-based learning. Maharashtra Animal and Fisheries Science University (MAFSU) was also involved in L3F and has developed ODL materials for veterinary surgeons and farmers.

During 2009-2011, more than 50 workshops and training programmes were conducted for university staff, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), banks and mobile companies in facilitating L3F through ODL.

In Tamil Nadu, L3F is reaching 20,000 men and women who receive ODL through mobile phones as well as through other media. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Indian Overseas Bank and various co-operative banks are active partners in L3F. Learning materials on goat rearing, dairy, poultry, sustainable horticulture, financial inclusion and financial literacy are reaching the primary stakeholders on a daily basis. COL has facilitated a Farmer’s Association involved in L3F in
developing and managing a website www.l3farmerstamilnadu.com. The initiative has helped 2,000 women to generate assets and income worth CAD $2.5 million.

A study was conducted to compare the health of goats owned by L3F participants and non-L3F participants in a group of villages. The study showed certain statistically significant differences between the two groups of participants and indicated that L3F participants have better productivity due to capacity building and networking involved in L3F initiatives, particularly in the health and reproductive parameters. During November 2010, 25,000 villagers signed a memorandum submitted to the Government of India to enhance the role of banks in credit-specific capacity building through ODL. NABARD has requested COL partners to work with various banks at a district level to initiate L3F. A longitudinal study to assess the impact of L3F in quantitative and qualitative terms has been completed.

In Gujarat, the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) is initiating L3F in Rajkot district; 850 men and women from rural communities are involved. ODL materials on dairy, organic agriculture and rural business enterprises are reaching these participants. A company called Sahyog Krishi Vikas Pvt. Ltd. has been formed with the participants. Farmers have been trained to develop video ODL materials.

Mann Deshi Mahila Cooperative Bank’s study shows that the saving habit among L3F participants is significantly higher than that of non-L3F participants. The World Bank in its source book “ICT in Agriculture” has published the case study of L3F in Tamil Nadu as an innovative practice. The University of Guelph and CIDA, in collaboration with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, have launched a major seed development program using the concepts and practices of L3F. Mann Deshi Mahila Cooperative Bank’s study shows that the saving habit among the L3F participants is significantly higher than that of the non-L3F participants.

In collaboration with the University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada, COL has developed a Learning Management System called LIVES (Learning through Interactive Voice Educational Systems). The goal is to provide communities with a learning tool based on audio messages using mobile phones. COL can scale up its interventions because more than a thousand learners can be reached through this system, which can provide automated feedback and can be used to transmit voice mail and audio messages in any language or dialect.

UBC has integrated a learning management system and a learning content management system in LIVES. A beta test covering 200 women was completed. A course on Sustainable Horticulture in Tamil has been completed and delivered through LIVES.
The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad is involved in assessing the potential of LIVES and has developed a framework for conducting large scale field trials covering 20,000 farmers in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

COL supported a workshop for the African partners of L3F, which was hosted by VIDIYAL, India, on integrating linkages between community banks and commercial banks in L3F in India in June 2010. The workshop was conducted by Dr. P. Thamizoli, COL consultant from India. The participants, which included L3F partners such as NGOs, banks and universities from Kenya and Uganda, were trained by illiterate and semi-literate women involved in community banking and by officers of banks and financial institutions. They also visited sites in Theni and Dindigul and saw the actual community banking in operation and enterprises developed through community banking.

**Skills Development**

COL conducted a two-day workshop with the State Resource Centre (SRC) Kerala in November 2010 in Thiruvananthapuram to discuss potential collaboration and capacity building in ODL for non-formal skills development. Twenty-nine participants from the University of Kerala, RM Radio, Hibiscus Digital Media Pvt. Ltd., DIET, SRC-Kerala, Government College for Women and other institutions attended the workshop. As a result of the workshop, SRC-Kerala has made the decision to develop their Certificate in Community Development for distance delivery with the aim of training 3000 Preraks or volunteers. COL engaged Professor Santosh Panda to support the SRC team with workshops and remote materials review and editing support. Prof Panda facilitated workshops at SRC Kerala to build capacity in the planning of distance education programmes and the development of interactive print materials in April 2011, January and June 2012.

Between July-October 2009, CEMCA facilitated seven community radio stations to obtain wireless operating licences (WOL), which is the final step before obtaining a broadcast licence.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India entrusted CEMCA to organise 10 state level consultations for Community Radio Awareness in India. These consultations were held between November 2009 and March 2010.

1. The Barefoot College, Tilonia, Rajasthan. More than 100 participants attended; 90% from the civil service.
2. The Shillong Club, Meghalaya, November 2009. 80 representatives from seven of the eight North East regions were represented.
3. Faridabad. 108 participants attended the consultation and 11 Expressions of Interest were received.
4. Chanderi, December 2009. 80 participants from the state attended the consultation and 15 Letters of Expression were received. Based on a suggestion by CEMCA, participants were able to raise funds and paid 50% of the cost of the transmitter.
5. Tiruchendur, December 2009. The consultation attracted 100 institutions to apply for Community Radio at the event and 16 Expressions of Interest were received.
6. Waynad, Kerala, January 2010. 16 institutions gave Expressions of Interest for starting a Community Radio station.
7. Bhudikote, Karnataka, January 2010. 100 institutions attended the consultancy. Representatives from eight Community Radio stations in the state presented case studies and over 20 delegates gave Expressions of Interest for launching a Community Radio station.
8. Pune, February 2010. More than 100 delegates participated in the two-day meet and 20% of them gave Expressions of Interest.

9. Mukteswar, Uttarakhand, March 2010. The Tata Energy Resources Institute (TERI) was the local partner. Delegates from 45 institutions attended the workshop and 15 representatives gave Expressions of Interest.

10. Kanpur, March 2010. 50 institutions were briefed on the advantages of Community Radio and 19 people were motivated to apply for the licence.

With funding from the Government of India, CEMCA organised a series of Community Radio Awareness workshops in 2011-2012. The themes for the workshops included media literacy, community radio sustainability and creative content production. The eight workshops were held at:

- Ranchi, 8 November 2011
- Jammu, 5-7 December 2011
- Andaman, 23-25 January 2012
- Patiala, 28 February-1 March 2012
- Arunachal Pradesh, 12-14 March 2012
- Bodhgaya, Bihar, 12-15 March 2012

Four regional consultations at Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Agartala and Konark were completed by 31 December 2010. The capacity of 248 applicants was enhanced.

CEMCA has developed an online Community Radio Application Form and an electronic processing, monitoring and management system www.cronlineindia.net. The portal was inaugurated by the Honourable Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting in August 2010.

CEMCA’s proposal of bringing together 106 community radio stations to understand their successes and challenges was accepted by the Government of India. The First National Community Radio Sammelan was held on 7-9 April 2011. There was a poster exhibition of 67 community radio stations. A compendium was released. Four CEMCA awards for the best thematic campaign, community engagement, sustainability initiatives and promoting local culture and talent were distributed by the Hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Ms. Ambika Soni.

Representatives of UNESCO, UNICEF, Ford Foundation, World Bank, One World Asia and national developmental agencies (the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Rural Development, Local Governance, Department of Science and Technology) were introduced to the opportunities that exist through the medium of community radio.

CEMCA also showcased 10 empowered community women, which was made possible through the “Science for Women Health and Nutrition” community media project.

CEMCA, in association with One World Foundation, created an interactive content sharing website for community radio stations at www.edaa.in.

CEMCA organised the second Community Radio Sammelan in Delhi from 18-20 February 2012. Representatives from more than 129 stations attended the event. With the grant from Ford Foundation, CEMCA brought four experts from Australia, South Africa, USA and the UK to share their experiences on community/public radio. The National Community Radio awards initiated by CEMCA were presented to 13 winners in five categories: Thematic, Community Engagement, Promoting Local Culture, Most Creative/Innovative Content and Sustainability Model. The Government of India provided cash awards to the winners.
The Compendium “Details of Functional Community Radio Stations in India” was published in July 2011 and updated in February 2012 with more stations and information added. The revised Compendium was released during the Sammelan.

CEMCA facilitated two Community Women Broadcasters Training workshops. Participants were trained in different aspects of broadcasting with a view to making community radios more inclusive and participatory.

- The first workshop was held in Puducherry from 20-23 September 2011. Twenty-one people from seven community radio stations attended the workshop.
- The second workshop was held in Baramati from 15-18 November 2011. Eighteen people from six community radio stations attended.

Three community radio stations at Delhi University, Guru Nanak Girls’ College at Ludhiana and City Montessori School at Lucknow were identified to offer the Department of Science & Technology (DST) programme on women and health.

Two experts were identified to conduct the baseline studies and another two experts to conduct building workshops in the three community radio stations. The studies and workshops were completed in July 2009.

An orientation workshop for community radio stations on Science for Women Health & Nutrition was held at the Indian Council for Social Science Research in September 2009. The workshop was organised by Rashtriya Vigyan Evam Prodyogiki Sanchar Parishad (RVPSP), DST, with CEMCA providing technical support. The workshop brought together 33 representatives from 26 community radio stations (CRSs) and imparted a common understanding of RVPSP’s Science for Women’s Health & Nutrition project. Thirty new CRSs were also identified for potential partnerships.

A mid-term Monitoring and Evaluation was undertaken by CEMCA in April 2010 for 10 community radio stations.

Nine community radio stations have been selected as project partners in Phase II of the Science for Women Health & Nutrition programme. The partners will produce and broadcast a daily series in the local language in engaging and participatory formats over a period of one year. A 1,000 household baseline survey and capacity building exercise was also conducted. In Phase III, the plan is for 18 community radio stations to take part.

The Department of Science & Technology has, for the fourth consecutive year, entrusted CEMCA with the task of supporting seven more functional community radio stations for the “Science for Women’s Health and Nutrition” project.

CEMCA facilitated the setting up of an I-Radio at the Central Institute of Education Technology and National Council of Educational Research and Training CIET/NCERT in association with the Open University Malaysia in June 2010. The radio station is called Umang.

CEMCA also facilitated the capacity building of Satish Lade and Ajit Horo from CIET at the Open University Malaysia in March 2011.

**Healthy Communities**

Ekta Mittal of Maraa (a media and arts collective based in Bangalore, India) and Rukmini Vemraju of CEMCA attended the international training-of-trainers workshop in Vancouver, Canada in September-October 2009.

Partners’ knowledge and skills in developing non-formal ODL programming were increased through a “trainers train themselves” approach. Various approaches were reviewed and analysed, including participatory content creation (India), use of drama (Jamaica, Malawi), community ODL programmes
(Jamaica, Tanzania). Strategies and tools were reviewed and plans made concerning the International Peer Group, Community Media Space on WikiEducator.

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia Pacific Conference in February 2010 in Bangalore, India. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned about community radio in Asia Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills training was imparted on how community media can be used for disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity.

The Bangalore Declaration was created at the conference and passed by the AMARC Asia Pacific general assembly. It is a collective statement of participants’ beliefs and commitments including the use of community radio as a tool for non-formal education and food security.

COL sponsored N. Prakash of Kalanjiam Radio, Dhan Foundation; E. James Rajasekaran, People’s Association for Rural Development; Ramnath Bhat; Ekta Mittal of Maraa and Venu Arora of Ideosync to the conference.

A research project on “Designing Mobile Information and Content Strategies for Grassroots Participation” was conducted by COL and UNESCO’s Communications and Information Sector (CI) in Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh, India. The report was completed in July 2011. Additional partners included IIT-Delhi, Development Alternatives, and Radio Bundelkhand with research executed through Swinburne University (Australia). Training workshops on participatory content creation for mobiles were run in April and June 2010.

Zahir Koradia and Gram Vaani of Maraa were engaged to support installations and trials of a software application, which enables the integration of mobile telephones to support interaction, user generated content, etc. in three radio stations (Atlantis, Upington, Worcester) in South Africa in September 2011. Mentoring and support continued through June 2012.

An assessment and plan were completed for a community learning programme on women’s health in Madhya Pradesh with Radio Bundelkhand, Development Alternatives and local health authorities.

The Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), Ahmedabad is the key partner in a CEMCA initiative to build community capacity in use of ODL technologies. A four-day workshop was held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in April 2010. Twenty female participants from the radio team and health workers from Arogya SEWA were trained to develop content on health issues and create programmes in varied formats both in broadcast and non-broadcast modes.

A workshop on a community learning programme on Occupational Health Issues was held at SEWA Rural Centre-Manipur in February 2011. Twenty participants (community radio staff, health workers, community members representing different occupations and two researchers) built their skills in setting up a community health programme around occupational health issues using a consultative approach and interactive formats. The medical and Radio-CLP experts present included two medical doctors, Dr. Renuka Patva and Dr. Riddhi Shukla, as well as Satish Nagaraju of the OneWorld Foundation.

CEMCA conducted a workshop on Community Learning Programme on Health at the Mann Deshi Tarang Vahini Community Radio, Mshwad in August 2011. Thirty people from 11 community radio stations took part.

In December 2011, Maraa (India) and the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community worked together with AMARC to plan and run a three-day residential workshop on developing participatory learning programmes for 14 community broadcasting trainers and managers from Asia Pacific
at a regional training forum held in Bangkok, Thailand. Kaberi Choudhury from Drishti and Arti Jaiman from Gurgaon ki Awaaz participated from India.

**Integrating eLearning**

The Commonwealth Computer Navigators Certificate (CCNC) is an IT literacy course based on the International Computer Driver’s Licence (ICDL) using Open Office on either a Linux or Windows Platform. The materials are based on the ECDL/ICDL Syllabus Version 5.0 (www.ecdl.com).

The high quality training materials are available free of cost to anyone in the Commonwealth and beyond at www.col.org/ccnc. IGNOU was one of the seven partner institutions that contributed to the course development in the initial stages. Professor Uma Kanjilal and Dr. Pankaj Khare represented IGNOU.

The Inter-University Consortium (IUC), IGNOU has agreed in principle to conduct Learning4Content training in wiki skills. Learning4Content workshops were held at:

- Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani, Uttarakhand, June 2010: 20 participants.
- Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, June 2010: 28 participants.
- Teertankar Mahaveer University, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, September 2010: 31 participants.

CEMCA is promoting the EasyNow platform in partnership with Acharya Narendra Dev. College (ANDC), New Delhi and the Open University of Sri Lanka. A workshop on EasyNow was held at ANDC in October 2009. Seventeen participants built their capacity to create OER using EasyNow. A set of EasyNow modules (Introduction, Textual Delivery, Audio Delivery, Streaming Slide Shows, Video Delivery and ODL format) were developed and distributed. An EasyNow Workshop was organised at Anna University, Chennai in January 2010. Ten participants from the University and the region attended the workshop.

CEMCA, in collaboration with Wawasan Open University, conducted a four-day Training the Trainers workshop on Advanced EasyNow in Penang, Malaysia in June 2010. V. Krishnamoorthy, creator of EasyNow, was the consultant at the workshop.

CEMCA organised an EasyNow Workshop at KRS Group of Institutions – Tiruchengodem, Tamil Nadu in August 2010. Sixteen faculty members were trained.

CEMCA organised an EasyNow Workshop on Open Source ICT Tools at Shri Vishnu Engineering College for Women (SVECW), Bhimavaram in July 2011. Twenty participants attended.

An EasyNow Workshop was organised by CEMCA at the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Community College (MGRC) in July 2011. Twenty educators underwent training at the workshop.

An EasyNow workshop was organised for the staff of the State Institute of Educational Technology (SIET), Hyderabad in July 2011. SIET has since uploaded 100 educational videos on the Internet using EasyNow compression techniques. Information on this initiative is available at www.Eduframe.net.

Four experts were identified in July 2009 to support CEMCA’s radio-enabled learning initiative. The experts were briefed and technical personnel oriented towards multi-deliverable modules in Humanities and Languages (Hindi and English Literature). Two core groups were formed. The pilot recording, pre-testing and actual production were completed in August 2009.

Nineteen lessons were uploaded to the CEMCA website. This has also been approved by the National Advisory Board, Government of India on National Mission on Education through ICT for adaptation, through IGNOU.
A National Core Group on Radio Enabled Learning was formed under the able guidance of Vibha Puri Das, Secretary, Higher Education, MHRD, Government of India. A four-quadrant approach to OER in the Humanities and Social Sciences has been developed with radio as the central medium of dissemination.

Radio-enabled learning has been extended to the Skills Development Sector and a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU) in February 2011 for the creation of content of the course for public transport drivers and tuk tuk drivers.

The National Trust for People with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment commissioned CEMCA to develop a multimedia resource kit for parents and care givers, aimed at early intervention for children with various disabilities to help them realise their learning potential. A two-day orientation meeting in July 2009 was called By Voice and Vision to develop the basic content of the resource kit for early intervention in enhancing quality of life for children with Visual Impairment and Additional Diseases (VIAD). The core group was oriented towards writing for multimedia. The first meeting of the core group was held in October 2009 to discuss content development. Sucheta Phadke, Vice President, ILFSETS, was the original Instructional Design partner for the content development. She was succeeded by Asha Pandey of CMD El Design.

The prototype for the alpha test is under review and feedback is being obtained from different stakeholders. The National Trust has provided additional funds for some valued additions. The demo product was released in September 2010.

CEMCA organised the post-conference workshop on Community Media and Convergent Media in New Delhi in February 2010. CEMCA supported seven participants to the workshop.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Vice President of COL, Professor Asha Kanwar (now President and Chief Executive Officer) was invited to give the convocation address at the SDNT Women’s University in December 2011.

The CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting was held at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia on 28 September 2011.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including 40 participants from various Indian institutions. The COL’s Asa Briggs Lecture was delivered by Dr. Shashi Tharoor, MP.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) was held in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Upamanyu Basu, Director, Higher Education attended the meeting on behalf of Shri Amit Khare, India’s Focal Point for COL at the time.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.
• Nine learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009,
• One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
• Seven learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
• Ten learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Three learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Four learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
• One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
• Six learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
• Four learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
• Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2012.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by India for 2012-2015 are:

• Showcasing international best practices, particularly in technical education,
• Helping India adopt a transnational approach to quality assurance and accreditation, by developing international benchmarking of standards and practices,
• Developing systems and models for mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas, certificates and credit transfers among the various institutions in Commonwealth countries, and
• Instituting exchange mechanisms, including fellowships for all groups of faculty working for the ODL system among the Commonwealth countries
MALAYSIA

COL Focal Point:  Professor Dr. Rujhan bin Mustafa, Ministry of Higher Education

BACKGROUND

Malaysia has been a consistent and valued COL partner over the years. The eminent Malaysian Tan Sri Dato’ Professor Gajaraj Dhanarajan was the President and CEO of COL from 1996 to 2004, and other Malaysians have held leadership roles within the organisation. Open and distance learning (ODL) is popular in Malaysia, with about half of working adults involved in ODL. Teacher training through ODL is thriving. Malaysia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Dato’ Dr. Ansary Ahmed of Asia e-University is an Honorary COL Advisor. Professor Dr. Zarida Hambali, Director of Academic, Ministry of Higher Education is a member of the Advisory Council of CEMCA.

Dato’ Professor Ir Dr. Radin Umar Radin Sohani, the former Director-General of Department of Higher Education at the Ministry of Higher Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2008-2010.

Dr. Hisham bin Dzakiria, an Associate Professor at the College of Arts & Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia, is on attachment at COL in 2012. He is primarily working in the area of Higher Education.

SUMMARY

COL works with partners in Malaysia in a number of initiatives, particularly in higher education, skills development, healthy communities and integrating eLearning.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The Open University Malaysia (OUM) co-sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to “translate in practice” the implementation of the TQF for VUSSC. Professor Zita M. Fahmi of the Malaysian Qualifications Authority attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL sponsored Hazalina binti Hashim of OUM to a Conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009.
An international roundtable to showcase COL’s QA toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and several non-Commonwealth countries attended the meeting, including Professor Dr. Abtar Kaur of OUM.

The quality assurance in multimedia learning materials (QAMLM) guidelines have been disseminated to the Ministry of Higher Education (Malaysia).

Professor David Asirvatham of University of Malaya and Halimatolhanin Mohd. Khalid of OUM attended as experts in the international base camp for quality assurance held at Madurai Kamaraj University in February 2010.

CEMCA conducted a multimedia content development workshop at Bangladesh Open University in February 2011. The participants were taken step-by-step through technical aspects of content creation from installing the necessary software to adding multimedia support to content. Professor David Asirvatham of University of Malaya was the consultant at the workshop.

COL’s Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme (CEMBA/MPA) is offered by the Wawasan Open University (WOU). A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September-October 2009 for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants including Mr. Prakash V. Arumugam and Ms. Li Lian Yap of WOU participated in the workshop.

WOU hosted the Academic Board and the Executive Governing Board meetings of CEMBA/MPA in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Professor Dr. Chee Kim Loy and Professor Wong Tat Meng of WOU attended the meetings respectively.

Professor N.V. Narasimham and Prakash Arumugam are current members of the Academic Board of CEMBA/MPA. Professor Wong Tat Meng is the member of the Executive Governing Board.

WOU hosted the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Penang from 29 November-1 December 2011. The workshop was inaugurated by Professor Wong Tat Meng of WOU. Participants from eight member countries of the CEMBA/MPA consortium participated. Dr. Chan Yuan Eng, Chong Fook Suan, Cheah Kee Sam, Dr. Low Hock Heng, Dr. Toh Guat Guan, Jason Rozario and Professor P. Bhandigadi of WOU attended the workshop.

COL has been supporting the education of five students per year for the Masters in Instructional Design and Technology (MIDT) of the Open University Malaysia (OUM). In 2011, a research study began on the career progression of graduates in the MIDT programme and was completed in April 2012. COL sponsored Hardeep Singh of Catholic High School, Petaling Jaya in the MIDT online programme. Another research study on Career Progression of Women graduates of the CEMBA/MPA programme was commissioned by COL. Dr. Teoh Ai Ping of Universiti Sains Malaysia was the lead researcher for the study which comprised women graduates from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The study was completed in June 2012.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Prakash V. Arumugam, Lum Li Sean, Lilian Yap, Oei Hong Lim and N.V. Narasimham from WOU were nominated for the programme.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

The Government of Maldives, through CEMCA, requested OUM to design, acquire, prepare the software and integrate a complete radio station capable of sending programmes through the Internet. The equipment
was assembled and pre-tested at OUM before shipping to Male. Initial training was held in Male in October, and advanced training for three trainees from the Maldives on the use of the equipment was held in Kuala Lumpur in November 2009. The cost of the training was shared by the Government of Maldives, CEMCA and OUM.

The Internet Radio (IRadio) was launched on 3 December 2009 in the Maldives. The IRadio system was developed by the Ministry of Education, Maldives, CEMCA and OUM. The system is provided to all schools and provides access to quality learning material across the atolls of the Maldives.

CEMCA facilitated the setting up of an IRadio at CIET/NCERT in association with OUM in June 2010. The radio station is called Umang.

CEMCA facilitated the participation of Ahmad Zulfikarnin Ramli of OUM and K.Y. Khor of Wawasan Open University to attend the eINDIA 2010 conference in Hyderabad in August 2010.

Healthy Communities

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in Bangalore, India in February 2010. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned new awareness of community radio in Asia Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills in using community media as part of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity.

Sonia Randhawa, Deputy President of AMARC Asia Pacific, attended the workshop.

Integrating eLearning

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity”.

Professor John Arul Phillips of Asia eUniversity attended the first workshop for Heads of Commonwealth Universities on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and the fifth workshop in Dar-es Salaam, Tanzania on 25 May 2011.

The workshop on “OER and Impact: Ensuring that Open Content Builds Educational Quality in Higher Education in Asia” was held at Wawasan Open University in October 2011.

As part of its efforts to promote the EasyNow platform and other low-cost technologies for ODL, CEMCA, in collaboration with Wawasan Open University (WOU), conducted a four-day Training of Trainers Workshop on Advanced EasyNow in Penang, Malaysia in June 2010. Pat Toh Swet Ting, Ishan Abeywardena and K.Y. Khor of WOU attended the workshop.

CEMCA conducted an EasyNow Workshop at the University of Malaya (UM) in November 2010. Representatives from the University of Malaysia, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Multimedia University, University Sains Islam Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi MARA attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. The Policy Forum for Asia and the Pacific: Open Educational Resources was held in Bangkok from April 23-24, 2012. Ishan Sudeera Abeywardena of Wawasan Open University and Amir Hussain bin Mod. Ishak of University
Putra Malaysia attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting was held at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia on 28 September 2011. Dr. Zarida Hambali was invited to the meeting.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Hisham bin Dzakiria of the Universiti Utara Malaysia; Dr. Kuldip Kaur and Dr. Tina Lim of the Open University Malaysia; Dr. John Arul Phillips of eAsia University and Professor Wong Tat Meng of Wawasan Open University.

The Open University Malaysia (OUM) was bestowed the Excellence in Distance Education Award for Institutional Achievement, and Prof. Chan Lai Keng of the Universiti Sains Malaysia was the recipient of the Award Recognising Learning Experience (Degree Granting Programme).

Prof. Emeritus Anuwar Ali of OUM was the keynote speaker on “Developing the Community: The Role of Universities and Open and Distance Learning”.

The Ministry of Higher Education and COL, in cooperation with Wawasan Open University, co-hosted the Regional Focal Points Meeting for Asia in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

Professor Dr. Morshidi Sirat, Deputy Director attended the meeting on behalf of Professor Dr. Rujhan Mustafa, Malaysia’s Focal Point for COL.

The then COL President Sir John Daniel gave the opening keynote address at the Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities in Penang in October 2011. He also delivered the opening keynote at the International Conference on Lifelong Learning 2011 in Kuala Lumpur in November 2011.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Four learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009,
- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2009,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2010,
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2010,
- Two learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2011.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Malaysia for 2012-2015 are:

- Teacher education,
- Expansion of quality higher education and share programmes among institutions globally,
- Linking Malaysia education online (MEDO) to COL’s network,
- Malaysia’s eLearning Framework (recently launched),
- Malaysia’s Life Long Enculturation Initiative (recently launched),
- Lifelong learning: COL’s programmes such as Lifelong Learning for Farmers will increase capacity and development in the rural and remote areas of Malaysia, and
- Regional Centre COL initiative.
MALDIVES

COL Focal Point: Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef, The Maldives National University

BACKGROUND

Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean with a population of 310,000 dispersed across a number of islands and atolls. This geography presents distinct development challenges, which are partially addressed through the expansion of open and distance learning (ODL). While literacy levels are high and the education system is well developed, the country seeks to make more effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) and to expand learning opportunities for people located in remote areas. Maldives is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

The Honourable Mrs. Zahiya Zareer, former Minister of Education, was the Regional Representative for Asia on COL’s Board of Governors and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board until 2010.

Mr. Ahmed Yasir, the former Deputy Director, Foreign Relations at the Ministry of Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2007-2010 and Ms. Jameela Ali, the former Head of External Relations, Ministry of Education, was the Focal Point from 2010-2012.

SUMMARY

Maldives is involved in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). It hosted a VUSSC training workshop in 2010 and has a member on the Management Committee. COL works with partners in Maldives in several areas related to Livelihoods and Health, particularly skills development.

Several initiatives in Maldives are led by COL’s regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA). Maldives hosted the 9th CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting in Male in December 2009, at which the President and Vice President of COL and the Director of CEMCA participated.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.
Maldives is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November-December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of participants in ICT and content development using ODL as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Mohamed Liraar of the Centre for Maritime Studies, Maldives College of Higher Education attended the workshop.

The VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in preparation for the Male workshop was held in Singapore in collaboration with the National Institute of Education at the Nanyang University of Technology, Singapore. The team leaders included Ali Nishaman Nizar and Fathimath Mumthaz, Maldives.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Ali Nishaman Nizar of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture and Team Leader, Fathimath Mumthaz of the Centre for Open Learning and Team Leader, Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef of the Centre for Open Learning and COL Focal Point, Aminath Adam, Hawwa Neena Ali and Therisha Fathimath of the Centre for Open Learning attended the workshop. As a result of the Maldives workshop, a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture in Small States is being developed and currently being used in other Commonwealth countries.

The 9th VUSSC training and materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Idham Mohamed of the Maldives attended the workshop.

The Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore from 11-16 November 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011. Dr. Asim Abdul Sattar (Team Leader from Maldives) attended the meeting and workshop. Nasiha Abdul Muhaimin and Mohamed Shihab attended only the workshop.

Nazda Adam of the Centre for Open Learning participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth. Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef of Maldives represents Asia/Pacific.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef and Abdul Waahid Ibrahim of Maldives attended the meeting.

The 2nd VUSSC Management Committee Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The Committee reviewed the progress to-date and drafted the plan for the next year. The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef attended both meetings.
Teacher Education

A Consultative Meeting was the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands) and was held in the Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims at strengthening the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth of Learning on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers using ODL strategies.

Adam Shareef Umar and Hussain Majid of the Centre for Continuing Education and Jaadhulla Hussain Thaufeeq of Maldives attended the meeting.

Higher Education

CEMCA conducted a multimedia content development workshop for 40 participants including Mohamed Adil of the Faculty of Computing and Business Management, Villa College, Maldives at the Bangladesh Open University in February 2011. Participants were trained through all technical aspects of content creation from installing the necessary software to adding multimedia support to content.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

The Government of Maldives, through CEMCA, requested the Open University Malaysia (OUM) to design, acquire, prepare the software and integrate a complete radio station capable of sending programmes through the Internet. The equipment was assembled and pre-tested at OUM before shipping to Male. Initial training was held in Male in October 2010, and advanced training for three trainees from the Maldives on the use of the equipment was held in Kuala Lumpur in November 2009. The cost of the training was shared by the Government of Maldives, CEMCA and OUM.

The Internet Radio (IRadio) was launched on 3 December 2009 in Maldives. The IRadio system was developed by the Ministry of Education, Maldives, CEMCA and OUM. The system is provided to all schools and provides access to quality learning material across the atolls of Maldives.

Integrating eLearning

CEMCA facilitated the participation of Zeena Abdul Gadoor from the Muhiyuddin School, Villingili to make a presentation on Digital Story Telling/IRadio at the eINDIA at Hyderabad in August 2010.

CEMCA, in collaboration with Wawasan Open University, conducted a four-day Training of Trainers workshop on Advanced EasyNow in Penang, Malaysia from 21-24 June 2010. Rizwan Shuhudha and Roza Ibrahim of the Centre for Continuing Education, Maldives attended the workshop.

The University of New England, NSW, Australia, donated 25 EduFrame laptop computers to Maldives. These were distributed to 23 Grade 3 children of the Muhiyuddin School, Villingili. CEMCA facilitated the conversion of the text books into Digital Text Format.

CEMCA organised a three-week capacity building programme in August-September 2010 for a five-member team from Maldives to work with open source software in order to create interactivity and to convert the Mathematics textbook into interactive formats. The team, led by the Hon. Minister of State for Education, Dr. A.A. Maniku, presented the study for the use of Eduframes by Grade 3 children at the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6).
OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL/CEMCA sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including F. Hilmy of Muhhyiddin School, Dr. Ahmed Ali Maniku of the Ministry of Education, Nadhuwa Sharafudddeen of the Education Development Centre and Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef of the Centre for Open Learning and COL Focal Point.

Jameela Ali and Dr. Ali Fawaz Shareef, Maldives’ Focal Points for COL, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009, and
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Maldives for 2012-2015 are:

- Conducting workshops on transforming education using ICT,
- Creating a network where mobile technology is used to reach the outer atolls,
- Creating mobile content, especially audio materials with interactivity,
- Teacher training and capacity building with special emphasis on multi-grade teaching, and
- Strengthening and enhancing the resources and materials for adult and community education.
BACKGROUND

As Pakistan continues to strive for universal basic primary, it faces the related challenge of increasing access to learning opportunities at the secondary and tertiary levels. Other challenges related to “Learning for Development” include building capacity in the design and delivery of open and distance learning (ODL) and expanding the use of digital technology to enhance learning for university students. Pakistan is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Professor Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman, FRS, General Coordinator of the Committee on Science and Technological Cooperation Islamabad (COMSTECH), is the Representative for Asia on COL’s Board of Governors. He is also a member of the Board’s Executive Committee.

Professor Dr. Mahmood H. Butt, the former Vice Chancellor of the Allama Iqbal Open University, was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2011.

SUMMARY

COL and its regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), are working with partners in Pakistan in COL initiatives related to higher education, open schooling and integrating eLearning.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for members of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA) in the Asian region in Nainital in June 2010. Dr. Muhammad Javed Iqbal and Moiz ud Din Ahmed Siddiqui of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) attended the workshop.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one (41) participants from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Professor Dr. Nazir Ahmed Sangi of AIOU attended the AGM and workshop.
Tony Dodds was contracted by COL to conduct a study on the Proposal and Implementation Plan for the Establishment of a National Open Schooling Institute for Lifelong Learning by AIOU, Pakistan. The report was submitted to AIOU for consideration in May 2012.

Higher Education

CEMCA supported one session on Digital Library Quality at the 3rd International Conference on Digital Libraries in Delhi in February 2010. CEMCA and Sucheta Phadke, one of the Core Group members, presented a lead paper on the quality assurance in multimedia learning materials (QAMLM) guidelines. The session was attended by about 100 participants and copies of QAMLM guidelines were distributed to them. CEMCA sponsored Dr. Rubina Bhatti of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Nazia Iqbal of Khuldunia Public School to the conference.

CEMCA conducted a multimedia content development workshop at the Bangladesh Open University in February 2011. 40 participants including Mr. Irfanullah of Peshawar University attended the workshop. Participants were trained in technical aspects of content creation, from installing the necessary software, to adding multimedia supports to content.

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA (CEMBA/MPA) programme is offered by AIOU in Pakistan. A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September-October 2009, for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants including Prof. Majid Rashid of AIOU participated in the workshop.

The Academic Board and the Executive Governing Board both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Professor Dr. N.A. Sangi and Prof. Majid Rashid of AIOU attended the meetings respectively. Professor Rashid was nominated as a member of the Academic Board and Professor Dr. Sangi was nominated as a member of Executive Governing Board.

Nazim Hussain of AIOU attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November-1 December 2011.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Salman Qureshi, Adnan Riaz and Nazim Hussain of AIOU were nominated for the programme.

A study on Career Progression of Women graduates of the CEMBA/MPA programme was commissioned by COL. Dr. Teoh Ai Ping of Universiti Sains Malaysia was the lead researcher for the study which comprised women graduates from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The study was completed in June 2012.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

In December 2011, COL, the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and Maraa (India) worked together with the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) to plan and run a three-day residential workshop on developing participatory learning programmes for 14 community broadcasting trainers and managers from Asia Pacific at a regional training forum held in Bangkok, Thailand. Rafia Arshad from the Uks Radio Project, Pakistan, participated in the workshop.

Integrating eLearning

A series of capacity building workshops on Open Educational Resources (OER) took place as part of the COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The first
workshop took place in April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. Muhammad Ismail of the National University of Science and Technology attended the workshop. The fifth workshop was held in May 2011 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Azra Naseem of Aga Khan University attended the workshop.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Professor Dr. Nazir Ahmed Sangi, Vice Chancellor of the Allama Iqbal Open University, is a member of the CEMCA Advisory Council. The CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting was held at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. Prof. Dr. Sangi was invited to the meeting.

Professor Dr. Parveen Munshi, Pakistan’s Focal Point for COL, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Seven learners from Pakistan participated viz:

- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Three learners took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2009,
- Two learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010, and
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Pakistan for 2012-2015 are:

- Professional development of practitioners and development of OER for open schooling,
- Support in the Virtual Education Project Pakistan (VEPP) by arranging experts/speakers from Commonwealth member countries to deliver lecturers in the various fields of Higher Education,
- Support the training of trainers in both curriculum and instructional design in higher education institutions using technologies that are appropriate for formal and non-formal settings,
- Support conventional educational institutions to make the transition to dual mode: formal and ODL, and
- Building capacity among educators to develop eLearning materials for ODL courses and development and use of OER.
BACKGROUND

An Asian nation of about five million people, Singapore possesses a wealth of education resources. Singapore’s institutions and professionals contribute to the advancement of open and distance learning (ODL) and the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) for education in the region.

Ms. Leong May Fong and Ms. Mandy Cheng, the Assistant Directors of International Relations in the Ministry of Education, were Focal Points for COL from 2008-2010 and 2010-2012 respectively.

SUMMARY

Singapore has hosted international meetings for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and has a representative on the Advisory Council of COL’s regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA).

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The VUSSC Team Leaders’ meeting was held in Singapore in 2009 in collaboration with the National Institute of Education, Nanyang University of Singapore. Five team leaders from four countries attended the meeting in preparation for the Maldives boot camp. The team leaders drafted the framework for a diploma course on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore co-hosted the 10th VUSSC Team Leaders meeting from 11-16 November 2011 and the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in Educational Leadership at the National Institute of Education (NIE) from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Jacques See, Associate Professor Jonathan Goh and Assistant Professor Hairoon Salleh of NIE attended the meeting and workshop. Belinda Tay, Mindy Low, G. Lee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Betsy Lim, Dr. Zoe Boon, Dr. Catherine Chua and Associate Professor David Ng of NIE and Lee Lai Yong of Junyuan Secondary School attended the workshop.
LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrating eLearning

In association with the Asian Media Information and Communication (AMIC) Centre Singapore, CEMCA supported the participation of experts from Commonwealth Asian countries in July 2010 at New Delhi. Attending were the Director of AMIC, Kalinga; the AMIC Programme Officer and A. W. Khan, Assistant Director General of UNESCO. Their participation was partially sponsored by CEMCA.


OTHER ACTIVITIES

Dr. Daniel Tan Tiong Hok, Director, Centre for Educational Development, Nanyang Technological University, is a member of the CEMCA Advisory Council. Dr. Tan was invited to the CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia in September 2011.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) was held in Penang, Malaysia from 25-27 September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Mandy Cheng, Singapore’s Focal Point for COL, was invited to the meeting.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. One learner from Singapore took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2012.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL looks forward to continuing its association with its partners in Singapore.
SRI LANKA

COL Focal Point: Mr. S.U. Wijerathne, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

An island nation of about 20 million people located off the southern coast of India, Sri Lanka has high literacy rates and a strong network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Sri Lanka has contributed to COL’s budget in the past.

Professor Chandra Gunawardene of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is a UNESCO-COL Chair, part of a network of distinguished academics.

SUMMARY

Several initiatives in Sri Lanka are implemented by COL and its regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA). Dr. Upali M. Sedere, Director General of the National Institute of Education in Sri Lanka is a member of the CEMCA Advisory Council.

COL and CEMCA work with partners in Sri Lanka to advance open and distance learning (ODL) in several programmes areas particularly Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F), open schooling, Child-Friendly Schools, skills development and integrating eLearning.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. The COMOSA Constitution was signed by 22 partners including H.M. Gunaratne Banda of the National Institute of Education, Faculty of Education for All.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include Research, Gender, and Vocational and Technical Education. Dr. Upali Sedere of the Open School, National Institute of Education attended the AGM.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched in November 2010 during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6). The toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.
A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with 10 areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integrating Vocational and General or Academic Education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Dr. Upali Sedere of the Open School, National Institute of Education (NIE) attended the workshop.

The National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka is participating in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

The Open Schools Needs Analysis was completed in August 2009. The National Institute of Education (NIE) was a partner institution.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. H.M. Gunaratne Banda of the National Institute of Education, Faculty of Education for All of Sri Lanka and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for COMOSA members in the Asian region in Nainital, India in June 2010. Rasika Balasuriya and S.P. Nimal of the National Institute of Education attended the workshop.

Four participants from the National Institute of Education Sri Lanka participated in a five-day Training of Teachers on the Easy Now platform at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia. Kalinga Ahtulathmudali from Techkatha and Buddhika Sampat, from Tel Radio participated and presented papers on Digital Story telling at eIndia 2010 in August 2010.

Sunil Wijesinghe of Tel Radio participated as an expert in a workshop on Capacity Building for Community Radio in Himgiri Nabh Vishvavidyala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand in September 2010.

Trainees for developing digital content for the Open School and for Education for All, Department of NIE, were identified from NIE, Dialog Telecom, Pvt. Ltd. and Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka.

Twelve participants took part in a study tour of India about audio visual content development in September 2009. The participants included representatives from the National Institute of Education, the Ministry of Education and Dialog Telecom.

The participants visited the following institutions:
- Consortium of Education Communication (CEC), Delhi
- Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
- Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Delhi
- Electronic Multi-Media Resource Centre (EMMRC), Kolkata
- EMMRC, Roorkee

A workshop for Developing Integrated Digital Content for an Open School was held in Colombo in March 2010. Participants represented educational institutions and agencies, and the Ministry of Education. At the end of the workshop, 16 programmes were prepared, including three programmes using EasyNow for the Performing Arts.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Dr. Nanda Wanniarchachi of the National Institute of Education attended the AGM and eMM workshop.
COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Dr. Nanda Wanniarachchi attended the workshop and launch.

Teacher Education

Sri Lanka is one of eight countries participating in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative. The Contribution Agreement was signed by the Ministry of Education. The CFS project point people in Sri Lanka are Pathman Kandiah, Education Specialist, UNICEF Colombo and Y.A.N.D. Yapa, Chief Commissioner of Teacher Education. CFS partners in Sri Lanka are Ministry of Education; UNICEF Colombo and the National Institute of Education.

At the February 2010 meeting, partners decided that the CFS e-Learning package should be developed in Sinhalese and Tamil and delivered on CD ROM, and that Training of Teachers workshops for teacher educators on CFS should be organised. A Work Plan for the implementation of the UNICEF-COL CFS project based on these two major activities was developed.


COL contracted Professor Chandra Gunawardena of Sri Lanka as the consultant for the Consultative Meeting on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries, which was held in the Solomon Islands from June 28-30, 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers, using ODL strategies.


- 15 participants attended the first workshop from 30 June-3 July 2011
- 10 participants attended the second workshop from 5-7 August 2011
- 18 participants attended the third workshop from 1-2 September 2011.

22 participants from the same institutions attended a Critique Workshop from 22-24 September 2011.

The framework for the development of the eLearning package has been completed and the multi-media content materials for the eLearning package have been developed. The development of the eLearning package in Sinhala and Tamil languages was completed in December 2011 and piloted in February/March 2012.

Higher Education

COL sponsored Geetha Kulasekara of OUSL to a conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009. As co-author, Ms. Kulasekara won the Best Paper Award for “Learner Perceptions on Instructional Design of Multi-media in learning abstract concepts in science at a distance”.

COL also sponsored Dr. Gayathri Jayatilleke of OUSL and Professor U. Coomaraswamy to the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009.
CEMCA supported one session on Digital Library Quality at the 3rd International Conference on Digital Libraries in Delhi in February 2010. CEMCA and Sucheta Phadke, one of the Core Group Members, presented a lead paper on quality assurance in multimedia learning materials (QAMLM). The session was attended by about 100 participants, and copies of QAMLM guidelines were distributed to them. CEMCA sponsored Liyanarachchige Ramani Sunethra of the National Aquatic Resources Research & Development Agency (NARA) and Kamani Perera of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies to the Conference.

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010. It gave participants the opportunity to discuss COL’s current quality assurance instruments: the Quality Assurance Toolkit for Teacher Education, the Quality Assurance Toolkit for Distance Higher Education Institutions and Programs, and the COL RIM for institutional quality reviews. About 30 representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and several non-Commonwealth countries attended the roundtable.

COL and OUSL signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2010 to implement COL RIM at OUSL. A preparatory visit took place in August, followed-up by a verification visit in December 2010. The Lead External Verifier was Caroline Donovan; she was assisted by three trainee lead external verifiers: Colin Carson, Pamela Dottin and Violet Essilfie. The COL RIM implementation has been completed, and the final verification report was received in January 2011. COL RIM was part of a Commonwealth Secretariat-COL partnership.

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme (CEMBA/MPA) is offered by OUSL.

A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September-October 2009, for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade their knowledge and skills. Twenty-four participants, including Prof. S. W. Ranasinghe of the Department of Management Studies, participated in the workshop. S.A.D. Senanayake and K.P. Nishantha of OUSL attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November-1 December 2011.

The Academic Board (AB) and the Executive Governing Board (EGB) of CEMBA/MPA both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Professor S.W. Ranasinghe and Prof. Upali Vidanapathirana of OUSL attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively. Both are members of their respective boards.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Dr. L.P.S. Gamini, Dr. Prajna Senevirathna, Ms. P.R. Menike and Ms. S. Sapukotanage of OUSL were nominated for the programme.

A study on Career Progression of Women graduates of the CEMBA/MPA programme was commissioned by COL. Dr. Teoh Ai Ping of Universiti Sains Malaysia was the lead researcher for the study which comprised women graduates from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The study was completed in June 2012.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

Lifelong Learning Initiative has been launched by the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). COL discussed with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Colombo University the potential of ODL in building the capacity of personnel in the banking sector in microfinance. The Central Bank of Sri Lanka is partnered with OUSL and COL to build the capacity of the banking staff in Sri Lanka in microfinance using ODL.
Ruhuna University and Colombo University are continuing their activities with L3 Farmers. Ruhuna University conducted a stakeholders meeting. The launch of the L3Farmers mushroom growing initiative was held at Ruhuna University in October 2009. A workshop was organised at OUSL where L3F partners from four universities shared their experiences.

OUSL organised a “Certificate Course on Microfinance for Poverty Eradication” with the support of COL and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka for 300 staff of various banks.

More than 300 bank employees have completed the course on microfinance; Mobitel is an active partner with University of Ruhuna in the initiative for mobile phone-based learning. Among the first batch of 100 farmers enrolled with University of Ruhuna under L3F, mushroom cultivation has increased from 500 bags to 2,000 bags resulting in additional income for the farmers. Under the L3F initiative of OUSL, an increase in the productivity of ginger and turmeric has been observed. Mobitel has shown interest in enlarging mobile phone-based learning in agriculture under the mWomen and Liyasara programme. A proposal has been developed to reach 550 women during the first phase. The Department of Export Agriculture has requested that COL and OUSL train its extension staff in ODL and L3F.

Skills Development

The Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI) was identified as the key partner interested in using radio for learning. SLFI is a body set up directly under the President of Sri Lanka. A National Consultation was held in collaboration with SLFI in January 2010 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Consultation brought together people from media, development agencies, grassroots workers and academia to help articulate a demand for radio for learning. The Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mass Media and Information (MoMMI) and a representative from the Ministry of Science and Technology participated in the deliberations. The Additional Secretary (MoMMI) also pledged support to host further discussions and help the team come up with a proper position paper on the issue for due consideration by the government.

Kalanga Athulathmudali, a Sri Lankan Internet radio expert, was engaged by CEMCA. He assisted in the launch of internet radio at Wawasan Open University (WOU) in June 2010; demonstrated IRadio at eIndia in 2010 in Hyderabad; participated in convergent media session at Radio Asia 2011 and demonstrated IRadio to 17 institutions in and around Delhi in February 2011.

Healthy Communities

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in February 2010 in Bangalore, India. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned about community radio in the Asia Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills in using community media as part of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity.

The Bangalore Declaration was passed by the AMARC Asia Pacific general assembly. It is a collective statement of participants’ beliefs and commitments, including the use of community radio as a tool for non-formal education and food security.

Subramaniam Sathiyavani of Lifeline Radio Program, Internews attended the workshop.

In December 2011, COL, the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and Maraa (a media and arts collective based in Bangalore, India) worked together with the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) to plan and run a three-day residential workshop on developing participatory learning programmes for 14 community broadcasting trainers and managers from Asia Pacific at a regional training forum held in Bangkok, Thailand. Samanmalee Swarnalatha from the Gemidiriya Foundation participated from Sri Lanka.
Integrating eLearning

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”.

Professor Upali Vidanapathirana of OUSL attended the first workshop for Heads of Commonwealth Universities on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa.

CEMCA’s work in Sri Lanka includes promoting the EasyNow platform and other low-cost interactive technologies for ODL. Acharya Narendra Dev College (ANDC), New Delhi and OUSL were identified as the two partner institutions in India and Sri Lanka.

CEMCA, in collaboration with Wawasan Open University, conducted a four-day Training of Trainers Workshop on Advanced EasyNow in Penang, Malaysia from June 21-24, 2010. Representatives from the National Institute of Education, the University of Moratuwa and OUSL attended the workshop.

CEMCA organised the post-conference workshop on Community Media and Convergent Media in association with the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), Singapore and the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, Malaysia in New Delhi in February 2010. P. Pavitheran of Community Radio, Etuk tuk Community Broadcasting attended the workshop. Kalinga Seneviratne of AMIC (a Sri Lankan currently based in Singapore) was the consultant for the CEMCA session.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The CEMCA Advisory Council Meeting was held at Wawasan Open University, Penang, Malaysia in September 2011. Dr. Upali Sedere was invited to the Meeting.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored Dr. S.E. Lakamalage of the National Institute of Education, Ramani Tantrigoda of OUSL, Nisansala Vidanapathirana of the University of Colombo and Professor Mahinda Wijeratne of the University of Ruhuna to the Forum.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Asia) was held in Penang, Malaysia from 25-27 September 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

N.H.M. Chitrananda attended the meeting on behalf of S.U. Wijeratne, Sri Lanka’s Focal Point for COL.

Ishan Sudheera Abeyawardena, a Sri Lankan expert currently based at Wawasan Open University, Malaysia, was at COL in May 2012 on the Executive Secondment Programme. He worked with the Technology and Knowledge Management Division at COL on “training” his algorithm for discovery of OER.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Substantial number of learners from Sri Lanka participated in these courses;
• Two learners took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2009,
• Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management system (CSDRMS) in 2010,
• Two learners took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Six learners took the International Federation of Red Cross Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Six learners took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2010,
• One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
• Two learners took the UNHCR Effective Writing course in 2011,
• One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
• One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011, and
• Seven learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2012.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Sri Lanka for 2012-2015 are:

• Quality assurance,
• Access to higher education,
• Teacher education,
• Lifelong Learning for Farmers, and
• Integrating eLearning.
CARIBBEAN

Antigua & Barbuda | The Bahamas | Barbados | Belize | Dominica | Grenada | Guyana | Jamaica
St. Kitts & Nevis | St. Lucia | St. Vincent & the Grenadines | Trinidad & Tobago
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth Caribbean consists of 12 small states, of which 10 are island nations. Belize and Guyana, located in Central and South America respectively, are the exceptions. While Jamaica has a population of 2.7 million and Trinidad & Tobago has 1.4 million, the other countries all have a population of less than one million.

The Caribbean nations are distinct in many ways, yet they share a number of common challenges. There is a huge unmet need for tertiary qualifications and teacher training, particularly related to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning. Support is required for the expansion of open schooling. New approaches are needed to help expand access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

COL works closely with all Commonwealth Caribbean nations through dozens of initiatives that help expand access to quality education and training using distance education and appropriate technologies.

In the Caribbean, COL works to support Learning for Development through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), ICT in Education initiatives, promoting the use of open educational resources (OER) and higher education.

Here are some recent regional activities; specific activities in each country are outlined in the individual Country Reports that follow.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

All 12 Commonwealth Caribbean nations are members of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). A number of Caribbean educators have attended VUSSC training and materials workshops. These intensive workshops are building capacity in ICT and content development using open and distance learning (ODL). Participants collaborate to develop content for tertiary-level courses and degree programmes.

Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011.
LIVELIHOODS AND HEALTH

Integrating eLearning

Educators across the Caribbean are rapidly developing their skills and knowledge of ICT, with the support of COL.

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in Education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Trinidad & Tobago) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. The Focal Points attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT in Education Survey took place in the Caribbean. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua and Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

GENDER

Gender equality is a cross-cutting corporate goal for COL. The advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment are central to COL’s agenda of Learning for Development. COL is working to ensure it is a model organisation that mainstreams gender in all its processes and at all levels. COL’s Gender micro-site provides Commonwealth countries with a one-stop, comprehensive platform to access print and electronic resources on gender and ODL with a special emphasis on ICT.

REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia from 22-24 March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States.
REGIONAL PRESENCE

COL maintains strong relationships with many stakeholders in the Caribbean, including member governments, partner institutions, donors and individuals. COL’s Honorary Advisors, a network of eminent ODL professionals, includes a representative from the Caribbean. The region is also represented by a UNESCO-COL Chair and a network of individuals, selected by member Governments, who liaise directly with COL as Focal Points. COL creates specific country action plans and country reports to ensure the region’s needs are addressed.

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) was organised by COL and co-hosted by the Trinidad & Tobago Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education on 28-30 March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years. Focal Points share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. The key issues identified at the Caribbean Focal Points Meeting were:

- Qualifications frameworks,
- Regional policies,
- Collaboration among government ministries, and
- Boys’ underperformance.

REGIONAL BROCHURES

COL has regional brochures that summarise its activities in each of the four regions of the Commonwealth. These can be found on COL’s website at www.col.org/regional.
BACKGROUND

Antigua & Barbuda is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 88,000. Literacy rates and enrolment in primary and secondary education are high. Antigua & Barbuda contributes regularly to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Antigua & Barbuda is an active participant in COL’s regional activities and meetings in the Caribbean, and is a member of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). COL’s Regional Focal Point in Antigua & Barbuda, Peecheeta Spencer, was named an Honorary Fellow of the Commonwealth of Learning at the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Kochi, India in November 2010.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Antigua & Barbuda is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development as well as developing self-instructional
materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Maxime M.V. James of the Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping in Antigua & Barbuda attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010. This workshop was hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Oswald Joseph of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs attended the workshop.

The Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore in November 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011. Jacintha Pringle (Team Leader from Antigua & Barbuda) attended the meeting and workshop.

Edwards Luxmore of the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, Telecommunications, Science and Technology participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Training course.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. Participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was also conducted during the two-day meeting. Eloise Hamilton of Antigua State College attended the meeting.

Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Vernest I. Mack of the Antigua & Barbuda Union of Teachers and Desiree Antonio of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Vernest I. Mack of the Antigua & Barbuda Union of Teachers and Cynthia Crump-Russell of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia in March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL supported Peecheeta Spencer of the Antigua & Barbuda University Development Committee and COL Focal Point to the conference.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Dr. Cynthia Crump-Russell of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs attended the Roundtable.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrating eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer discounted software licences on Microsoft products to Caribbean countries (including Antigua & Barbuda)
participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme. Learners can access free email addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Peecheeta Spencer attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

In April 2011, Honourable Dr. Edmond Mansoor, Minister of State attached to the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Information, Broadcasting, Telecommunications, Science and Technology and Special Projects, requested the assistance of COL to train teachers in the Commonwealth Certificate for Teachers’ ICT Integration (CCTI). A proposal was submitted to the Minister in June 2011.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Doristeen Etinoff, Acting Director of Education, responsible for Planning, Services and Training, Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs to develop the country report for Antigua & Barbuda. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from several Caribbean countries, including Antigua & Barbuda, CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Jessel Edwards and Stacey Payne-Mascalls of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs attended the both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and COL, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended the Forum. Peecheeta Spencer was awarded the Honorary Fellow of the Commonwealth of Learning at PCF6. COL also sponsored Eloise Hamilton of Antigua State College to attend PCF6.

Peecheeta Spencer attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. Held every three years, this meeting provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.
**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

Two learners from the Antigua & Barbuda’s Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took COL’s eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Antigua & Barbuda for 2012-2015 are:

- Technical assistance with the development of a Digital Development Strategy,
- Technical training for staff at the Antigua State College in the use of Moodle to fully expand the reach of programmes to non-campus students, particularly those in Barbuda,
- Development of infrastructure, human and material resources required in an open school environment,
- Further strengthening of the Educational Broadcasting Unit (training in scriptwriting, recording and editing) to produce appropriate indigenous multimedia materials to enhance the use of technology in education,
- Assisting in the training of health media workers to provide appropriate culturally relevant educational materials, and
- Creating a one-stop e-bulletin zone for farmers and agricultural practitioners to provide ready access to information pertinent to increased food production and improved production systems.
THE BAHAMAS

COL Focal Point: Ms. Michelle Sears, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

The Bahamas is a small state of the Commonwealth, with a population of just under 350,000. Gross Enrolment Ratios are high for both primary and secondary education. The Bahamas contributes regularly to COL’s budget and participates in numerous COL activities.

Ms. Patricia Collins of the Ministry of Education was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2011.

SUMMARY

The Bahamas is an active participant in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). The Ministry of Education in The Bahamas has adopted COL’s Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI) to train their teachers and subject advisors. The Bahamas has participated in numerous COL regional initiatives such as contributing to the Information and Communication Technology in Education Survey, the Microsoft “Partners in Learning” initiative and capacity building workshops.

Three delegates from The Bahamas were sponsored to attend COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. Michelle Sears attended the COL Focal Points meeting in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. Dr. Pandora Johnson from the College of the Bahamas was on an Executive Secondment to COL in September 2010 to develop a strategic plan for her university.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSCC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

The Bahamas is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in VUSSC initiative.
VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

Kennedy Lightbourne of Gadites Maritime & Navigational Institute and Glenward Bain of Bahamas Maritime Connexion Ltd. attended the VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Apia, Samoa in November-December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development using open and distance learning (ODL) as well as developing content for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course.

As one of the team leaders for the Samoa workshop, Glenward Bain attended a pre-workshop planning meeting in Vancouver in October 2009.

Dr. Erecia Hepburn of The Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association attended the 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Male, Maldives in March 2010 hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. Workshop participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services.

Raymond Oriakhi of Westminster College attended the 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship in Lesotho in March 2011. Mr. Oriakhi also attended the 9th VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in Singapore prior to the Lesotho workshop.

A. Lester Flowers of The College of the Bahamas attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012. Dr. Leon Higgs participated in the VUSSC Management Committee meeting prior to the workshop.

Gladys Miller of The College of The Bahamas participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth and includes Dr. Leon Higgs from The Bahamas representing the Caribbean.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the TQF Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Leon Higgs of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting.

Dr. Higgs also attended the 2nd VUSSC Management Committee Meeting and the VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting, both held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting.

Open Schooling

At the request of the Ministry of Education, COL conducted three workshops to support the establishment of an open school in September 2011.

- The first workshop was about open schooling. Dressel Sherman, District Superintendent; Rose Smith, Curriculum and Instruction, Ministry of Education (MOE); Michelle Sears, MOE and the COL Focal Point attended the workshop.
- The second workshop was about the establishment of an open school. Gordon Mills of the College of the Bahamas; Gina Moss, Northeastern District, Department of Education; Patrinella Rolle, Career Path, MOE and Trevor Ferguson, Technical Cadet Corps, MOE attended the workshop.
The third workshop on the proposal for the establishment of the Open School. Elma Garraway, Permanent Secretary, MOE; Dressel Sherman, District Superintendent; Rose Smith, Curriculum and Instruction, MOE; Michelle Sears, MOE; and the COL Focal Point attended the workshop.

Attending all three workshops were Dr. Leon Higgs, Director of Higher Education and Life Long Learning, MOE; Altamease Munroe, Gladys Miller, and Dr. Pandora Johnson of the College of the Bahamas; Faye Bascom and Dr. Karen St. Cyr of INSPIRE, MOE; Dorcas Bowler of Library Services, MOE; and Reginal Saunders, Scholarships, MOE.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people representing 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Dr. Leon Higgs attended the AGM and eMM workshop.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Dr. Higgs also attended the workshop and launch.

Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Althea A. Hamilton-Grant of the Bahamas Ministry of Education and Janice Munnings of the College of The Bahamas attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Michelle Sears of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrated eLearning

In collaboration with SchoolNet SA, COL introduced the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI). It is an Advanced Certificate in Education for teachers and school leaders wishing to focus on information and communication technology (ICT) integration into school management, teaching and learning.

A COL consultant, Gerald Roos visited The Bahamas in December 2010 and introduced the CCTI to Ministry of Education management and the ICT in Education Core Team. He also conducted two workshops on implementation issues.

The Ministry of Education in The Bahamas has adopted the CCTI to train their teachers and subject advisors. The Commonwealth of Learning is training 50 mentors in The Bahamas to tutor teachers by distance.

The Ministry of Education has evaluated the CCTI content and defined a need to add an introductory module called “Information Communications Technology (ICT) Potentials and Possibilities”. The module
has been developed in The Bahamas and included in the master CD to be distributed to other countries in the Commonwealth. A local consultant, Leonora Archer, was contracted to write the materials.

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fourth OER workshop took place in November 2010 in Kochi, India, coinciding with PCF6. Faye Bascom and Dr. Karen St. Cyr from the Ministry of Education and Dr. Pandora Johnson from the College of The Bahamas attended the workshop and participated in PCF6.

On 18 October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including The Bahamas) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Michelle Sears attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT Monitoring and Evaluation workshop took place in November 2010 in Kochi, India with representatives from Guyana, The Bahamas and Trinidad & Tobago. Faye Bascom and Dr. Karen St. Cyr from the Ministry of Education and Dr. Pandora Johnson from the College of The Bahamas participated in the workshop.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Faye Bascom, Quality Assurance Coordinator, IDB INSPIRE Project Management Unit to develop the country report for The Bahamas. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including The Bahamas) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Michelle Sears and Bernadette Murray of the Ministry of Education attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Dr. Pandora Johnson from the College of the Bahamas was on an Executive Secondment to COL in September 2010 to develop a Strategic Plan for establishing a university in her country.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and COL, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and
Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Dr. Leon Higgs, Dr. Karen St. Cyr and Faye Bascom of the Ministry of Education and Dr. Pandora Johnson of the College of the Bahamas.

Michelle Sears, COL Focal Point for The Bahamas, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by The Bahamas for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing capacity within the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to use distance learning for farmer training, for ongoing professional development for technical staff resident in rural areas and to link rural farming communities with agricultural credit programmes in the capital,
- Providing training for teachers in the design/preparation of professional development resources at all levels, and
- Providing support for the College of The Bahamas Distance Education Plan.
BARBADOS

COL Focal Point: Mr. Laurie King, Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development

BACKGROUND

Barbados is a small state of the Commonwealth and the most eastern of the Caribbean islands. It has contributed to COL’s budget since 2005 and takes an active role in COL’s regional activities.

Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald of the University of the West Indies is an Honorary COL Advisor. Dr. Idamay Denny, the former Deputy Chief Education Officer (Planning and Development) at the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development, was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2010.

SUMMARY

Barbados benefits from its involvement in several key COL programmes including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the Microsoft “Partners in Learning” initiative and support for open schooling. Barbados participates in regional training workshops and attended the COL Regional Focal Points meeting in March 2011.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Barbados is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in VUSSC Initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

Marcia Marville of Barbados attended the 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop which was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 and hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners.
programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Valda V. Alleyne of the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) attended the meeting.

Open Schooling

COL and CXC signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2010 to identify possible avenues for collaboration. The purpose is to establish a formal basis of cooperation to develop an open and distance learning platform for open schooling for students and for distance learning for the training of teachers in subject specialisations for the teaching of CXC programmes.

Teacher Education


In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Patricia Warner of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Karen Best of the Barbados Union of Teachers and Jennifer Obidah of UWI, Cave Hill Campus attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL presented the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for effective institutional quality audits to staff of the Barbados Accreditation Council and UWI Open Campus in March 2010.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Dr. Ngoni Chipere and Dr. Monica Masino of the University of the West Indies and Mr. Laurie King of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development attended the Roundtable.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrated eLearning

A series of Open Educational Resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Valda Alleyne of BAC attended the second workshop in Namibia in May 2010.

On 18 October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Barbados) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational
institutions at no cost to the institution. Laurie King attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

The Hon. Ronald Jones (opened the Forums), Cecile Humphrey, Dr. Roderick Rudder, Paul Murphy, Vaneisha Cadogan and Burkley Lowe of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Laurie King, COL Focal Point for Barbados, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner in Barbados participated in the World Health Organization Writing Effectively course in 2009, and
- Three learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in Barbados participated in the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Barbados for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing and promoting a research culture among teachers and students using generic IT solutions to encourage the development of indigenous materials for use in education,
- Developing course materials that could be suitably adapted for the use of students with special needs,
- Streamlining and standardising courses to enhance relevance and allow for programme accreditation,
• Developing a renewable cadre of skilled specialists in technology and the corresponding redressing of the digital divide through infrastructural development, and
• Establishing strategic alliances with other institutions and sectors both locally and internationally for the purposes of information/resource sharing, collaborative course development and delivery, articulation and credit transfer.
Belize

COL Focal Point: Mr. Christopher Aird, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports

BACKGROUND

Belize is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 333,000. Much of the country’s natural environment is unspoilt, and there is strong emphasis on environmental education. Teacher education is a key priority for the Government of Belize. Belize contributes regularly to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

COL is contributing to learning for development in Belize on several fronts. Belize is active in major COL initiatives including the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Several partners in Belize are collaborating on the “Life Updates” community learning programme on healthy lifestyles. Representatives from Belize regularly take part in regional programmes and training workshops. Belize is also participating in the COL-COMSEC project on Multi-grade teaching. The project is aimed at enhancing the capacity of teachers and teacher educators on multi-grade teaching.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Belize is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Nelson Longsworth of the QA and Development Services, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports, Belize, attended the meeting.
Arnold Erwin of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Training course.

Rose Marie Pineda of Belize attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

**Open Schooling**

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Ms. Maud Hyde of the University of Belize was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi in November 2010. The COMOSA website at [http://comosa.org/wordpress/](http://comosa.org/wordpress/) was launched. It was agreed that COMOSA’s activities for the next three years would include research, gender and vocational and technical education. Cynthia Thompson of the University of Belize attended the AGM.

A COMOSA workshop on “Research in Open Schooling” was held in Delhi, India in November 2010. A Research Agenda with ten areas was adopted and four (Curriculum and Course Development, Integration of the Vocational Education with the academic/general education, Gender and Online Learning) were prioritised for the next two years. Cynthia Thompson of the University of Belize attended the meeting.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during PCF6 in Kochi in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries affiliated to the COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

The University of Belize is participating in the COMOSA research study on Online Learning Success Variations/Factors and the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Maud Hyde of the University of Belize and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

Belize submitted its formal proposal for establishing an open school. COL met with Mathias Vairez and Dr. Priscilla Lopez of the University of Belize in September 2011 in Trinidad & Tobago to discuss the Open Schooling Proposal. Mr. Vairez and Dr. Lopez were also invited to attend the Open Schooling Monitoring & Evaluation Workshop in Trinidad & Tobago on 19-23 September 2011.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch.

Cynthia Thompson of the University of Belize attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy Workshop and launch.
Teacher Education

The first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands) was a Consultative Meeting held in the Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers using open and distance learning strategies.

Inez Paquiul of Quality Assurance and Development Service, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports, Leonardo Pott of the University of Belize and Yvonne Tyndall of the Teacher Education Development Service attended the Consultative Meeting.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Cecilia Smith and Judy Florita Diego of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the meeting. The consultation document, Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

COL collaborated with CARICOM to organise the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Cecilia Smith of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the meeting.

COL and COMSEC organised an Instructional Design workshop in London from 14-18 May 2012, for 30 participants from Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa, and Solomon Islands. The aim of the workshop was to disseminate skills on Instructional design and develop Guidelines for the adaptation of the draft modules on Multi-grade teaching. Mrs. B. Ines Paquil of the Ministry of Education and Dr. Priscilla Lopez of the University of Belize attended the workshop.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

A programme development workshop with the Tumul K’in Learning Centre in Toledo District, Belize was held in June 2010, facilitated by COL and the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC). The participating organisations included the Isabel Palma Polyclinic-Ministry of Health, HECOPAB, Toledo Maya Women’s Council, Toledo Maya Women’s Council Youth Arm, Belize Family Life Association, Ak’ Kutan Radio Team and Tumul K’in Center of Learning.

Participants were trained in key areas of the community learning approach in programme design, programme format, story-based approach to learning content, informative and experience-based interview skills and blended learning strategies. Eighteen episodes (20-30 min.) of the programme “Life Updates” were created, with each programme airing three to five times per week between July 2010 and March 2011.

A second programme development workshop was held in in Toledo District in July 2011, facilitated by CARIMAC. It resulted in the design of a new 26-week community learning programme on healthy lifestyles, including diabetes, hypertension and substance abuse. Seventeen individuals, including nine women, participated in the workshop, representing the following organisations: the Toledo Maya Women’s Council and Youth Arm, HECOPAS - Ministry of Heath, Belize Family Life Association, CARE Belize, Punta Gorda Polyclinic, Independence Polyclinic, Hillside Clinic, Belize Council for the Visually Impaired, Ak’ Kutan Radio/Tumul K’an Center of Learning and Hamalali FM.

As follow up to the workshop, these organisations formed a programme management team and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on programme delivery through March 2012.
Following the June 2010 programme development workshop, mentoring visits to reinforce new capacities in community ODL programme development among Belize partners were conducted:

- 4-6 October 2010, by Barbara Jacobs Small (St. Lucia)
- 27 February-2 March 2011, by Rosamond Brown, CARIMAC (Jamaica)
- 4-8 June 2011, by Rosamond Brown, CARIMAC (Jamaica)
- 21-29 August 2011 by Rosamond Brown, CARIMAC (Jamaica) to the Toledo and Dangriga Districts.

A programme development workshop was held in Dangriga District in December 2011, facilitated by CARIMAC. It resulted in the design of a new 26-week community learning programme on healthy lifestyles, including diabetes, hypertension and substance abuse. Fourteen people, including 11 women, took part in the workshop, representing the Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA), Independence Polyclinic, Southern Health Hospital, CARE Belize, the Ministry of Health, Hamalali FM and Rising Star Youth Group/Hamalali FM.

Between March and June 2012, CARIMAC and COL ran two distance mentoring/training courses – each 40 hours over six weeks – on “Sustaining Community Learning Programmes: Writing Successful Sponsorship Proposals” and “Scriptwriting for Community Learning Programmes”. Registered learners included Amira Teul from the Toledo Mayan Women’s Council in Toledo District; Henry Miguel from Hamalali FM; and Michelle Reyes from the Community Agency for Rehabilitation and Education, Dangriga District.

**Integrated eLearning**

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to the Caribbean countries participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Kevin Harris attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Kevin Harris, Director, ICT Unit and Cecilia Ramirez Smith, Director, Teacher Education and Development service in the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports to develop the country report for Belize. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including Belize) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua & Barbuda on March 21, 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Kevin Harris of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011, on behalf of COL Focal Point Christopher Aird. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.
eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner from Belize took the World Health Organization Writing Effectively course in 2009,
- Two learners from Belize have completed the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) eLearning pilot course from March 15-May 14, 2010, and
- Five learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in Belize took the eLearning course on Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Belize for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing a national ODL policy and strategic plan with specific implementation plans at the institutional level,
- Expanding the technical and human resource capacity of tertiary level institutions to deliver courses online, including their current face-to-face courses and a national general secondary education (GED) program,
- Short-term training of teachers at all levels to use ODL techniques and access to long-term training programmes in Instructional Design,
- Expanding Belize’s access to open courses available in the Commonwealth, and
- Developing the capacity and skills of teachers at all levels to use ICT in the teaching and learning process.
DOMINICA

COL Focal Point: Ms. Marcella Powell, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development

BACKGROUND

Dominica is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 75,000. Known for its unspoiled natural beauty, the island nation is a developing economy with a dominant agricultural base. Dominica has contributed to COL’s budget since 2009/2010.

SUMMARY

Dominica is benefitting from participation in a number of COL initiatives including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the COL-RIM quality audit for Dominica State College, the ICT in Education initiative to expand information and communication technology (ICT) in education and the ICT in Education Survey for the Caribbean.

Dominica was represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in 2010 and at the COL Regional Focal Points meeting in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of ICT,
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Dominica is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

Katie Seraphine Julien attended the 9th VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in Singapore in February 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the VUSSC training workshop in Lesotho.

Dr. Helen F. Seaman, Veronne Nicholas and Ashley Massicotte of the Dominica State College participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.
Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Celia Nicholas of the Dominica Association of Teachers attended the meeting.

The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Stephenson Hyacinth of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and Celia A. Nicholas of the Dominica Association of Teachers attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference in St. Lucia in March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL supported Dr. Helen Seaman of the Dominica State College to the conference.

COL held a special session and presented the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for effective institutional quality audits to the Dominica State College’s Quality Assurance Team in April 2010. Dr. Helen Seaman and over 60 staff members attended the session. The College has submitted the COL RIM Readiness Self-Assessment Proposal to COL.

COL undertook a preparatory visit to the Dominica State College in August 2010 as part of the initiation phase of the COL RIM. The visit included a day of preparation and three days of meetings and training of management, self-reviewers and verifiers.


LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities


Integrated eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Dominica) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Marcella Powell attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.
An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Dominica Minister of Education nominated Veronne Nicholas in the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to develop the country report for Dominica. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including Dominica) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua and Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. Stephenson Hyacinth and Timothy Lavinier of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development attended the Forum. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL conducted an OER workshop with the State College of Dominica in February 2012. After the workshop, the College agreed to integrate OER into its curricula. Merill Matthew, Merlyn Jno-Baptiste, Steven Joseph, Mary Vidal and Gerald Corbette of the College attended the workshop.

In January 2012, COL conducted a scoping mission with representative of the Commonwealth Secretariat on the “Integration of ICT into teaching and learning and introducing the UNESCO CFT” with the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and the State College of Dominica. The Honourable Petter Saint-Jean, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, Jennifer Lafond, Permanent Secretary, Stephenson Hyacinth, Chief Education Officer, Timothy Lavinier of the Ministry and M. Mathew of the State College of Dominica were some of the officials consulted during the mission. A Three-Year Strategy for Professional Development of Teachers in ICT in Education was approved by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.


OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and COL, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Dr. Helen Francis-Seaman of the Dominica State College.

Marcella Powell, COL Focal Point for Dominica, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning
(ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Two learners from the Belize Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the Learning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- One learner took the UNHCR Operational Data Management course in 2011.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Dominica for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing an online delivery content system for distributing flash videos and lessons to stakeholders e.g. YouTube-type system,
- Training teachers in instructional design for online learning and videography,
- Developing a National Qualification Framework,
- Training teachers to teach the courses online e.g. Sustainable Agriculture,
- Developing the capacity and skills of teachers to use ICT in the teaching and learning process, and
- Training teachers to develop supportive online materials at various levels.
GRENADA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Andrew Augustine, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development

BACKGROUND

Grenada is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of just over 100,000 and a largely rural population. Enrolment rates are high for both primary and secondary education. Grenada contributes regularly to COL’s budget.

Mr. Julien Ogilvie, the former Chief Education Office at the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development was the Focal Point for COL from 2008-2011.

SUMMARY

Grenada stands to benefit from its participation in several COL initiatives aimed at expanding learning for development. This includes the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the Regional Higher Education Conference, the Microsoft “Partners in Learning” initiative to expand information and communication technology (ICT) in education and eLearning for International Organisations courses.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of ICT,
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Grenada is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

Chrislyn Charles Williams and Carols Gittens of T.A. Marryshow Community College participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.
Teacher Education


In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Margaret Sharma Charles of the T.A. Marryshow Community College attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia from 22-24 March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL invited the Honorable Franka Alexis-Bernardine, Minister of Education to the conference.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Mr. Andrew Augustine of the Ministry of Education attended the Roundtable.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

Following the Focal Point’s recommendation, COL met with officials of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and Ministry of Agriculture in June 2011 to discuss COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme and the recertification programme. COL presented the various dimensions of L3F to the officers of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry is studying the scope of developing a programme based on COL’s concept note.

Integrated eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Grenada) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Andrew Augustine attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise
awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community. The Honourable Franka Alexis-Bernadine, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, was a speaker representing the Caribbean region at the World OER Congress.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Arlene Buckmire-Outram, Permanent Secretary and Andrea Phillip of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development attended both Forums.

In February 2012, COL conducted a scoping mission on the integration of ICT into teaching and learning and introducing the Commonwealth Certificate for Teachers’ ICT Integration (CCTI) in the T.A. Marryshow Community College with officials from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, and management and staff from the T.A. Marryshow Community Centre. The Honourable Franka Alexis-Bernadine, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development; Arlene Buckmire-Outram, Permanent Secretary; Andrea Phillip, Deputy Chief Education Officer and Dr. R. Dunbar Steele, Deputy Principal of the T.A. Marryshow Community College were among those consulted during the scoping mission.

COL also facilitated a two-day “Mentoring the CCTI” training workshop at the College for representatives of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and several colleges and secondary schools.

Following the mission and training workshops a proposal to implement ICT in Education, and in specific the CCTI in Grenada, was developed and submitted to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development for consideration.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Andrew Augustine, COL Focal Point for Grenada, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to: share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in Grenada took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

Natasha Sylvester, from the Ministry of Finance, Grenada, is engaged as a COL e-tutor providing one-on-one tutoring via MOODLE for CSDRMS eLearning.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Grenada for 2012-2015 are:

- Training teachers in the area of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and special education,
- Providing training and technical expertise to the agricultural/agribusiness sector,
- Providing technical support and the training of staff to implement the Distance Education plan for T.A. Marryshow Community College and ODL at the level of secondary education,
- Training in conservation and environmental management, clean energy development and land surveying, and
- Training/capacity building in the area of human resource development to execute a national human resources development skills audit and sector analysis.
GUYANA

COL Focal Point:  Ms. Inge Nathoo, Guyana National Commission for UNESCO

BACKGROUND

Guyana is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 763,000. It is the only Commonwealth nation on mainland South America. Enrolment rates are high for both primary and secondary education. Guyana is a long-time contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Guyana is actively involved in a number of COL initiatives that are expanding access to quality education in the country. This includes the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI), the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) and the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programmes. Guyana participates in regional meetings and training workshops, and was well represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Guyana is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. Workshop participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Arnold De Mendonca of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry at the University of Guyana attended the workshop.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.
hCOL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Morella Joseph of CARICOM attended the meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Professor Seeta S. Shad Roath attended the meeting.

**Open Schooling**

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Professor Daizal Samad of the University of Guyana was one of 22 partners who signed the Constitution.

The COL workshop on Copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Professor Daizal Samad of the University of Guyana and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

**Teacher Education**


In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Olato Sam of the Ministry of Education and Colin Bynoe of the Guyana Teachers’ Union attended the meeting.

**Higher Education**

The Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme is offered by the University of Guyana. The Academic Board (AB) and the Executive Governing Board (EGB) both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Dr. Michael E. Scott and Professor Lawrence Carrington, Vice Chancellor of University of Guyana, attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively. Greaves O’Neil and Hector Edwards of the University of Guyana are the current Academic Board members. Professor Lawrence Carrington is a member of Executive Governing Board. Hector Edwards is the CEMBA/MPA Coordinator in Guyana.

Hector Edwards and Greaves O’Neil attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November-1 December 2011.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Four participants from WOU were nominated for the programme. Greaves O’Neil and Kadasi Ceres of the University of Guyana were nominated for the programme.

Professor Asha Kanwar of COL gave a presentation on the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) for effective institutional quality audits to University of Guyana staff and stakeholders from other Quality Assurance/Educational organisations in April 2010. The implementation of COL RIM was completed in June 2012. COL RIM implementation at the University of Guyana is a partnership between COL and the Commonwealth Secretariat.
COL supported Gary Mendonca of the University of Guyana at the COL NAAC pre-conference workshop on Quality Assurance in Dual Mode Institutions organised at Bangalore, in March 2011, on the occasion of the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Conference. Then COL’s former President and CEO, Sir John Daniel delivered the keynote and steered the workshop deliberations on the COL RIM model. COL’s Quality Assurance Toolkit in Higher Education was made available to the participants.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Mr. Yoganand Indarsingh of the Ministry of Education, Guyana attended the roundtable. He also presented the Guyana ODL policy at the Roundtable and helped develop the regional ODL policy framework.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrated eLearning

The Government of Guyana has embarked on an ambitious ICT in Education strategy in partnership with COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft. The partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2009 to develop and implement an ICT Professional Development Strategy for Teachers in Guyana.

COL appointed Neil Butcher to assess the current situation in the Ministry of Education and support the Ministry in implementation of the ICT component of its 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. A final report with a six-month “Quick Start Plan” was accepted by the Minister of Education in April 2010. A consultant is supporting management structures for the Initiative, advocacy for ICT in Education, monitoring and evaluation, a capacity audit, a strategy to support teachers and a teacher laptop initiative.

As part of the implementation of the plan, COL, in collaboration with SchoolNet SA, introduced the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI). It is an Advanced Certificate in Education for teachers and school leaders wishing to focus on (ICT integration into school management, teaching and learning.

Two consultants, Gerald Roos and Janet Thompson, visited Guyana in May 2010 to conduct a one-day meeting with the teacher training college management to outline the scope, approach and content of the CCTI, clarify accreditation and assessment issues and recommend preparation needed to offer the course including localisation and to conduct a three-day advocacy workshop for the integration of ICT into teaching and learning. The Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE) is investigating the possibility of adapting the material for local use on the Moodle platform.

Neil Butcher was appointed by COL and the Commonwealth Secretariat on a consultancy in Guyana in June 2011. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and local institutions, he completed the NCERD Computer Laboratory Proposal, capacity audit documentation and instruments, draft modules for Technology Literacy based on the UNESCO Competency Framework for Teachers, a monitoring and evaluation strategy and two proposals for laptops for teachers and schools.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Mohandatt Goolsarran, Director of the National Centre for Education Resource Development (NCERD), to develop the country report for Guyana. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including Guyana) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

A workshop on Design Principles for eLearning courses and integration of multimedia into eLearning was conducted at IDCE in December 2009. Thirty-two people attended the one-day workshop.

The Commonwealth Computer Navigators Certificate CD (printed version) has been distributed to Dr. Ramesh Sharma of the University of Guyana.
COL developed a template in Instructional Design of Learning Materials. The ICDE will train up to 15 selected staff members in the use of this tool.

A series of OER Capacity Building Workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. The fourth OER workshop took place in November 2010 in Kochi, India, coinciding with the 6th Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) that took place from 24-28 November 2010. Kim Spencer from Guyana was nominated by the Minister to attend the workshop and participate in PCF6.

An instructional design workshop was held in Guyana in April 2011. Eighteen participants from the University of Guyana and four from the Cyril Potter College of Education attended the workshop.

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Guyana) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Inge Nathoo attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago. Guyana is the first country in the Caribbean to benefit from this collaboration.

A mission to Guyana took place in December 2009 by COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft. The delegation met with Ministers of Education and Finance and senior officials at the Ministries and educational institutions. The Honourable Shaik Baksh, the then Minister of Education, agreed to the implementation of the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) in Guyana.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Delma Nedd, Kim Spencer and Marcia Joy Thomas of the Ministry of Education attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

COL’s Vice President Professor Asha Kanwar (now President & CEO) delivered a public lecture on “ICT in Higher Education: Who Stands to Gain?” as part of the Dennis Irvine Lecture Series at the University of Guyana in April 2010.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Dr. Seeta S. Shad Roath and Kim Spencer of the Ministry of Education. The Honourable Shaik Baksh also attended PCF6.
Inge Nathoo, Focal Point for Guyana, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Four learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010,
- One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Two learners took the Effective Writing course in 2011,
- One learner took the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2011,
- One learner took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011, and
- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Guyana for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing core modules for ICT Teacher Education to be delivered at Cyril Potter College of Education as well as CPD through NCERD,
- Developing the capacity and skills of teachers to use ICT in the teaching and learning process,
- Training teachers to develop supportive online materials at various levels, and
- Creating a support unit which can provide pedagogical as well as technical support to teachers using ICT in delivery of curriculum.
JAMAICA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Philbert Dhyll, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

Jamaica is the most populated Caribbean Commonwealth nation, with about 2.7 million people. Literacy rates and enrolment ratios for primary and secondary education are high. Jamaica is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

Former Jamaican Minister of Education, The Honourable Burchell Whiteman, O.J., is the Chair of COL’s Board of Governors.

SUMMARY

Jamaica is a strong COL partner in the Caribbean, participating in major COL initiatives such as the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL-RIM) for effective institutional quality audits, the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programmes, Lifelong Learning for Farmers and Healthy Communities. Jamaica takes part in regional meetings and training workshops facilitated by COL and was well-represented at the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in 2010.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Jamaica is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics but focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development using open and distance learning (ODL) as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Fritz Pinnock and Ibrahim Ajugunna of the Caribbean Maritime Institute attended the workshop.
The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 and hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Petronia Colley of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Fritz Pinnock of the Caribbean Maritime Institute attended the workshop.

Claudette L. Barrett attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Nadine Pryce of Spalding PO attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Yvonnette Marshall of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting. She also participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course.

**Teacher Education**

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Dr. Winsom Gordon of the Jamaica Teaching Council, Dr. Asburn Pinnock of the Sam Sharpe Teachers’ College and Coleen Clarke Russell of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Dr. Winsome Gordon, Marcia Mc Gann and Hedda Watson of the Jamaica Teaching Council, Ministry of Education; Dr. Asburn Pinnock of Sam Sharpe Teachers’ College, and Dr. Marcia Stewart of the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, attended the meeting.

**Higher Education**

COL and the University of Technology (UTech), Jamaica signed a Memorandum of Understanding in August 2009, agreeing to establish a code of practice agreement to pilot test the COL Review and Improvement Model (COL RIM) at UTech. The pilot testing of COL RIM (verification phase) was conducted by the UTECH staff in Jamaica in September 2009. Dr. Anna Perkins of UWI (Mona Campus) and Dr. Winsome Russell of UTECH attended the COL RIM Debrief Workshop in Abuja in October 2009. While UTech failed to qualify and was not COL RIM verified, UTech found the recommendations very useful and the President committed to the implementation of the recommendations in a systematic fashion. The university has also indicated that they would like to undergo the exercise again.

COL sponsored Chavel Green of the University College of the Caribbean, Jamaica to a Conference on ODL in Cambridge, UK in September 2009.
Mico University requested COL’s assistance to enable it to upgrade the under-qualified teachers to university degree status by distance education via online and print provision. A training workshop was held from April-July 2010. The training was delivered over a three-week period that included both distance and face-to-face learning activities and a final week of distance learning using Moodle. COL trained 29 trainers in the application of online and print instructional design methods. As a strategic and complementary measure, COL has sponsored a Mico staff member, Dennis McCoy, to study for the Master’s degree in Instructional Design and Technology online programme offered by Open University Malaysia.

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia in March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL supported Dr. Geraldine Hodelin of the UTech Academy, Jamaica to the conference.

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Australia and other non-Commonwealth countries, including Dr. Winsome Russell of UTech Jamaica, attended the roundtable.

COL supported Dr. Jeannette Bartley of the UTech to attend the COL pre-conference workshop on Quality Assurance in Dual Mode Institutions organised at Bangalore, in March 2011, on the occasion of the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Conference. The then COL President, Sir John Daniel, delivered the keynote and steered the workshop deliberations on COL RIM. COL’s Quality Assurance Toolkit in Higher Education was made available to the participants.

The University College of the Caribbean (UCC), Jamaica offers COL’s Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA programme (CEMBA/MPA). Thirty-four learners from Jamaica received their CEMBA at the University College of the Caribbean graduation ceremony in Kingston, Jamaica in November 2009.

A case method workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in September/October 2009 for selected faculty members of the CEMBA/MPA to refresh and upgrade the knowledge and skills. Chavel Green of UCC was one of 24 workshop participants. Twenty-three new case studies are being developed (including five from Jamaica) for the CEMBA/MPA bank of case studies.

Dr. Dameon Black and Dianna Boyd of UCC are members of the Academic Board (AB) of the CEMBA/MPA programme; Winston Adams is a member of Executive Governing Board (EGB). Dianna Boyd is the CEMBA/MPA Advisor. The AB and EGB had their meetings in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Dr. Black and Winston Adams of UCC attended the AB and EGB meetings respectively.

In April 2012 COL organised an online training programme on OER for Revision. Dr. Dameon Black, Monique Allen, S. Lawson, Margaret Barnett and Gwyneth Jackson of UCC were nominated for the programme.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Dr. Phylicia Marshall of the Ministry of Education and Mrs. Jackie Collins of CARICOM attended the Roundtable. Dr. Nancy George, a consultant from Jamaica, is the facilitator of the Roundtable.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

The Government of Jamaica’s Rural Agricultural Developmental Authority (RADA) is a partner in COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative. After a framework was developed for RADA’s participation in the initiative, a team visited the COL office in Vancouver, Canada to finalise the
partnership. Philip Chung, Senior Director, Division of Technology, Training and Technical Information, and Hartnell Campell, Web Programmer with RADA, visited COL in March 2010. They discussed the scope of initiating L3F in Jamaica and identified specific areas of collaboration.

In September 2010, COL presented the L3F framework to the officers of RADA and other secondary stakeholders, such as banks and telecom companies.

The title of the initiative is “Strengthening RADA in Technology-mediated Open and Distance L3F in Jamaica”. Areas of focus include the recertification programme for extension officers and strengthening the Financial Access for Responsible Members (FARM) Programme through L3F. This programme has been initiated and Dr. Laura Roberts Nkrumah of the University of the West Indies (UWI) is the consultant.

During 2010/2011, RADA has completed the following activities:

- Text messages relating to hurricane management, pest managements and agronomy were sent to 60,000 farmers.
- The first set of audio messages was sent to 35 framers. Feedback was assessed by RADA and LIME, the mobile phone service provider.
- A feedback mechanism has been developed. Farmers can provide feedback to RADA through a toll-free number.
- A team of five staff were trained in ODL-based multimedia. They have prepared a framework for the recertification programme.
- A database was developed using RADA’s National Farmers register of 146,000 farmers. Extension officers are able to update the data using mobile phones.

In collaboration with the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada, COL has developed a Learning Management System called LIVES (Learning through Interactive Voice Educational Systems). The goal is to provide communities with a learning tool based on audio messages using mobile phones. LIVES will enable COL to scale up its interventions because more than 1,000 learners can be reached through this system, which can provide automated feedback and can be used to transmit audio messages in any language or dialect. COL sponsored Hartnell Campbell of RADA and Petronia Colley of the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Jamaica, for training in LIVES, conducted by UBC in June 2010. UBC and COL have packaged the prototype of LIVES, which RADA is beta-testing using content developed for potato farming. The RADA ICT team has undergone a training programme in developing multimedia materials.

COL entered into an agreement with RADA in January 2012 to continue the L3F activities. A three-member team from RADA visited the L3F initiative sites in India in February 2012. The visit has helped RADA to refine its strategy in Jamaica.

Some of the developments in RADA supported by COL are:

- Five RADA officials completed their training in multimedia and web management.
- A self-directed learning multimedia module for extension officer on measurements and calculations has been completed.
- Ten extension officers were trained in strengthening social capital.
- An audio-based course for mobile phones on potato production has been completed.
- The social capital of the Christina Potato Growers Association has been strengthened.

Skills Development

In collaboration with Open Schools BC, COL facilitated a workshop on Strengthening Capacity for Blended Online Learning and Teaching Strategies for The University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), the Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies (FELS). Twenty two faculty participated in the workshop towards an institutional objective of improving quality in blended learning for TEVET programmers. The facilitator was Solvig Norman from Canada. Sixteen members of FELS have also joined the Flexible Skills...
Development Community Learning Network – an online community of practice for TVET teachers wanting to collaborate and share their learning on new approaches to teaching and learning.

COL is partnering with University of Technology (UTech) to develop a “Communiversity” programme to provide vocational literacy and skills training for young people in three marginalised communities in Kingston. COL facilitated a workshop in November 2011 at UTech to plan the new programme. The participants revised the UTech Occupational Skills Programme Blueprint and planned the essential elements of the new programme. Attending were representatives from the concerned communities, Social Development Commission, Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong learning, UTech and HEART NTA. Following the involvement of the Ministry of Education TVET Unit, COL facilitated a second workshop in February 2012 to draft course outlines and learning materials. Participants represented local communities, Jamaica Foundation of Lifelong Learning, Social Development Commission, HEART NTA and the Ministry of Education.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are 16 members from UTech, Jamaica.

Healthy Communities

Patrick Prendergast of the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), UWI attended the international training-of-trainers workshop (Vancouver, Sept/Oct-09). Key national and regional partners from different Commonwealth regions advanced the Three-Year Plan for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative (also linking it to UNESCO’s work in this area in the upcoming programme biennium 2010-2011). Partners’ knowledge and skills in developing non-formal ODL programming were increased through a trainers train themselves approach. Various approaches were reviewed and analysed, e.g. participatory content creation (India), use of drama (Jamaica, Malawi) and community ODL programmes (Jamaica, Tanzania).

Three programme development processes were run in Jeffrey Town, St. Mary’s Parish facilitated by CARIMAC:

- In July 2009, a 13-part series was developed on healthy environments in covering waste management, organic farming, nutrition and other areas. The series was aired twice on community radio station Jet FM.
- In July 2010, a 13-part series was developed on maternal and child health, entitled “Me & Mi Baby”. The series was aired twice on Jet FM.
- In July 2011, a follow-up 13-part series was developed on maternal and child health, entitled “Me & Mi Baby Too”, with strong collaboration from the area health authorities as well as the target community (pregnant women and fathers).
- Workshops integrated programme development with skills training. In all, some 30 different individuals were trained in learning programme design, presentation and production.
- CARIMAC has provided mentoring and follow-up training.

COL and CARIMAC also collaborated in building capacities to increase the volume and quality of non-formal learning opportunities available in inner city areas of Kingston, working with Roots FM and a group of seven community-based and non-governmental organisations:

- Nine social/community development workers participated in a follow-up Community Learning Programme workshop held over five days in July 2011. Organisations represented included: The Balm Counselling Agency, Jamaica Council for Drug Abuse, Mountain View Parenting Group, Women’s Media Watch, Mustard Seed Communities and Area Youth Foundation.
• Five groups were established based on areas of individual expertise. Topics for programme development were identified: unemployed youth, conflicts in blended families, smoking, abortion, and children and grief.

COL and CARIMAC also collaborated in building capacities in Spring Village, working with the Spring Village Development Foundation and local health authorities. A preliminary workshop was conducted in December 2011. In March 2012, 15 local community development, media, health workers trained in community learning programmes design, resulting in a design document for “Fi Wi Time Now”, a healthy lifestyles programme for youth ages 13-25. Four 15-minute programmes were made available as podcasts in the weeks following the workshop, and production and dissemination is ongoing.

Patrick Prendergast from CARIMAC was a member of COL’s delegation to the 10th World Conference of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) in November 2010 in Argentina. Mr. Prendergast presented at a session on educational media sponsored by COL and AMARC. His participation was jointly sponsored by COL and UWI.

Patrick Prendergast from CARIMAC participated in the Healthy Community partners’ workshop prior to PCF6 in Kochi, India in November 2011, and also participated in the COL-UNESCO Seminar, Learning from Community Media, as well as PCF6’s Community Development theme. Mr. Prendergast’s participation was jointly sponsored by COL and UWI.

Ivy Gordon of Jeffry Town Farmers’ Association and Jet FM, attended the AMARC regional event, Sharing Good Practices in Educational Applications of Community Radio in the Caribbean in Port-au-Prince, Haiti in May 2011. This was the first Caribbean conference of community radio broadcasters.

Mr. Prendergast and Rosamond Brown of CARIMAC attended COL’s Healthy Communities partners’ workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

Between March and June 2012, CARIMAC and COL ran two distance mentoring/training courses – each 40 hours over six weeks – on “Sustaining Community Learning Programmes: Writing Successful Sponsorship Proposals” and “Scriptwriting for Community Learning Programmes”. Registered learners included community members and representatives from Jet FM, Roots FM, and the Spring Village Development Foundation.

**Integrated eLearning**

COL and UNESCO hosted four open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops. These workshops form part of a series organised within a COL-UNESCO initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity”. The initiative’s aim is to promote the wider use of OER by expanding understanding of them by educational decision makers. Dr. Ethley London of the University of Jamaica attended the 2nd workshop in Namibia from May 4-6, 2010.

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer Caribbean countries participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme (including Jamaica) discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost. Dr. Phylicia Marshall attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.
COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This contributed to the 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Dr. Canute Thompson of the Ministry of Education and Dr. Ashburn Pinnock of the Sam Sharpe Teachers College attended both of the above mentioned forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India, 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Barbara Lamata Forster, Patrick Prendergast of UWI, Maria Stewart of the Joint Board of Teacher Education, Fritz Pinnock of the Caribbean Maritime Institute and Maria Protz of the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication.

The Honourable Burchell Whiteman was also present and participated actively in the conference. He visited COL’s regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), Delhi after the event and chaired the annual Advisory Council Meeting. He also paid courtesy calls on the Education Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and the Vice Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) was held in Trinidad & Tobago from 28-30 March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term reports of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan. Dr. Phyllicia Marshall, Senior Education Officer at the Ministry of Education, attended the Meeting on behalf of Philbert Dhyll, Focal Point for Jamaica.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. Learners from Jamaica participated in course as follows:

- Two learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- Three learners took the International Development Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.

Michele Robinson, a Debt Management Consultant, was the content writer for CSDRMS eLearning and is also engaged by COL as the senior e-tutor supporting tutors and learners via Moodle for CSDRMS eLearning.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Jamaica for 2012-2015 are:

- Converting in-service teacher training course materials to ODL/mixed mode and train college lecturers to deliver and assess these courses,
- Developing the capacity and skills of teachers’ college staff to offer the content at the Bachelor’s degree level,
- Developing the capacity and skills of teachers to competently use ICT in the teaching and learning process,
- Establishing a Vessel Monitoring System for small-scale fishers, and
- Supporting for fisher organisations through literacy, empowerment and other fundamental social interventions.
ST. KITTS & NEVIS

COL Focal Point: Ms. Jacqueline Flemming, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

The islands of St. Kitts & Nevis form a small state of the Commonwealth. It has a population of about 50,000, largely rural. St. Kitts & Nevis contributes regularly to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

St. Kitts & Nevis continues to benefit from its involvement in key COL activities including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth and regional training initiatives.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

St. Kitts & Nevis is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics but focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development using open and distance learning (ODL) as well as in developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Royston Wayne Griffin of the Department of Maritime Affairs, Ministry of Transport in St. Kitts & Nevis attended the workshop.

Dujan Boddie of Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Training course and Sonia McPhail of the same College participated in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Instruction course.
VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Glenville S. Edwards of the St. Kitts & Nevis Ministry of Education attended the meeting.

Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Ron Dublin-Collins of Teachers’ Union, Ionie Liburd-Willett, Joycelyn Archibald-Pennyfeather and Daniele Wallace of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Joycelyn Archibald-Pennyfeather of the Ministry of Education attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Mr. Jafric Rhymer of the Ministry of Education attended the Roundtable.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrated eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including St. Kitts & the Nevis) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Curtney (Quinton) Morton attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The St. Kitts & Nevis Minister of Education nominated Curtney (Quinton) Morton, Education Planner, Ministry of Education to develop the country report for St Kitts & Nevis. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including St Kitts & Nevis) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.
COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Ionie Liburd-Willett and Quinton Morton of the Ministry of Education attended both Forums.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) was held in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three Year Plan, 2012-2015. Curtney (Quinton) Morton of the Ministry of Education attended the Focal Points Meeting on behalf of Jacqueline Flemming, Focal Point for St. Kitts & Nevis.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

Four learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in St. Kitts & Nevis took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by St. Kitts & Nevis for 2012-2015 are:

- Transforming special education training for teachers into an online course,
- Training graduate teachers in pedagogy,
- A course in Communication for Behavior Change for learners from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Education,
- Training of trainers for several government ministries,
- Leadership development training module for government ministries, and
- Skill development in ODL: develop capacity to create and publish content online for training purposes.
ST. LUCIA

COL Focal Point:  Dr. Rufina Frederick, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

St. Lucia is a small island state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 172,000. Enrolment rates for primary and secondary education are high. Tourism is the largest contributor to the economy. St. Lucia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

St. Lucia is actively involved with the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and several other COL regional activities.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

St. Lucia is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Maria Lashley and Lorraine Oliviere of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St. Lucia attended the workshop.

Dr. Anthony Felicien and Dr. Beverly Lansiquot of St. Lucia attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Natalie Bodley-Jn. Baptiste of the Ministry of Education participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Training course.
VUSSC) has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Philomene Alexander, Registrar of Examinations at the Ministry of Education and Culture attended the Meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held from Nov. 22-23, 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Cathy Gill of St. Lucia attended the meeting.

Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Sonia Severin and Rita Dyer of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, Dr. Cadalia Ambrose and Marietta Edward of the Ministry of Education, and Julian Monrose of the Teachers’ Union attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Julian Monrose of the Teachers’ Union and Virginia Poyotte of the North America & Caribbean Education International attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia from March 22-24, 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

COL engaged Barbara Jacobs Small, former head of St. Lucia’s national broadcaster, as a trainer-facilitator for the development of community learning programmes in Belize, with a view to future capacity and programme development in the Eastern Caribbean. She co-facilitated a workshop in Toledo District, Belize, in June 2010 and conducted a mentoring visit in September 2010.

Integrated eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in Education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including St. Lucia) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Dr. Rufina Frederick attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.
COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua and Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Dr. Rufina Frederick, Ron Isaac and Cathy Gill of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and Royston Emmanuel of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from November 24-28, 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub- themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Ms. Cathy Gill of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Dr. Rufina Frederick, COL Focal Point for St. Lucia, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) held in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by St. Lucia for 2012-2015 are:

- Formulating and implementing post-secondary/higher education legislation and policy,
- An Information System for managing the education sector,
- Establishing quality assurance systems and related professional development of personnel at all educational levels,
• Improving modalities of delivery of instruction by building capacity at the community college to develop/deliver courses/materials for online delivery at various levels and developing competencies of teachers and other education officials (principals, curriculum specialists, education officers, lecturers, etc.) to use ICT in the teaching and learning process, and
• Developing classification plan/career path for teachers.
St. Vincent & The Grenadines

COL Focal Point: Mrs. Susan Dougan, Office of the Prime Minister

BACKGROUND

A group of many islands and cays in the Caribbean, St. Vincent & the Grenadines is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 110,000. Enrolment rates are high for both primary and secondary school.

SUMMARY

St. Vincent & the Grenadines continues to benefit from its involvement in key COL activities including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth, Skills Development, the Regional Higher Education Conference and regional training initiatives. St. Vincent & the Grenadines was represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in 2010 and the Regional Focal Points Meeting in 2011.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Cindy Edward of the SVG Community attended the workshop.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.
Teacher Education

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Beverly Neptune and Lou-Anne Gilchrist of the Ministry of Education and Ronald Clarke of the Teachers’ Union attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. Eula Adams of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference which was held in St. Lucia in March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate on the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL invited Nicole Bonadie-Baker, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, to the conference.

COL organised a Regional ODL Policy Roundtable for the Caribbean in June 2012 at Barbados to develop a regional ODL policy framework. Ms. Lou –Anne Gilchrist of the Ministry of Education and Mr. Ulrick Sutherland of Caricom attended the Roundtable.

LIVELHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

In collaboration with Open School BC, COL facilitated a workshop to strengthening capacity for blended online learning and teaching strategies for St. Vincent & the Grenadines Community College. Twenty five teachers from the TVET division participated in the workshop towards an institutional objective of introducing e-learning in to the TVET curriculum in 2013. The facilitator was Solvig Norman from Canada.

The Flexible Skills Development Online Community Learning Network is a forum for TVET practitioners to discuss the implementation of flexible and blended approaches to TVET delivery. Using social networking software, managers, educators and policy makers can interact and collaborate both regionally and with international experts. There are four members from the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC).

Integrated eLearning

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including St. Vincent & the Grenadines) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Susan Dougan attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Keith Thomas, Project Officer, Education Project Management Unit, Ministry of Education to develop the
country report for St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports including St. Vincent & the Grenadines and a final summary report with regional trends was published.

COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua and Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of open educational resources (OER) beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Nicole-Bonadie-Baker of the Ministry of Education and Nigel Scott of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Joey Warrican of the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Community College.

Susan Dougan, COL Focal Point for St. Vincent & the Grenadines, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance in St. Vincent & the Grenadines took the eLearning course on the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by St. Vincent & the Grenadines for 2012-2015 are:

- Wellness promotion/development of social communication techniques,
- Developing programmes and training in leadership for health sector workers, and
- Education in public health.
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

COL Focal Point: Ms. Karen Rosemin, Ministry of Science, Technology & Tertiary Education

BACKGROUND

Trinidad & Tobago is a small state of the Commonwealth, with a largely rural population of about 1.4 million. Literacy rates are high, as are enrolment rates for primary and secondary education. An active and consistent COL partner, Trinidad & Tobago contributes annually to COL’s budget.

Professor Clement Sankat of UWI is the Regional Representative for the Caribbean on COL’s Board of Governors. He is also Chair of the Board’s Audit Committee.

Ms. Lystra Sampson-Ovid, the former Programme Director of the Distance Education Unit at the Ministry of Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2012.

SUMMARY

Trinidad & Tobago has seized a number of opportunities to support “Learning for Development” by being actively involved in COL programmes such as the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), “OER for Open Schools” and other open schooling initiatives, Child-Friendly Schools and the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI).

Trinidad & Tobago was well represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning and participates regularly in regional activities and training.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Trinidad & Tobago is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.
The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics but focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November/December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development using open and distance learning (ODL) as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Kevin Harris of Trinidad & Tobago attended the workshop.

The VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in preparation for the Male workshop was held in Singapore in collaboration with the National Institute of Education at the Nanyang University of Singapore. The team leaders included Dr. Laura Roberts-Nkrumah of Trinidad & Tobago.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Dr. Laura Roberts-Nkrumah of the Department of Food Production, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, UWI attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Sherwyn Millette of the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts attended the workshop.

Dr. Balchan D. Rampaul of Trinidad & Tobago attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

Vishal N. Ramnarine of the Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies and Lystra Sampson-Ovid of the Ministry of Education enrolled in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course. Junior McIntyre of the Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies and Paul Reginald of the Ministry of Education participated in the VUSSC LINUX Online Training course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth and includes Karen Rosemin of Trinidad & Tobago representing the Caribbean. She attended the meetings in Vancouver in August 2009.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Michael Bradshaw of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad & Tobago attended the meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Karen Rosemin and Lystra Sampson-Ovid attended the meeting and training.

The TQF Procedures and Guideline document was officially launched on 28 April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and 3 May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia. The TQF can be downloaded from the VUSSC website. Michael Bradshaw of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad & Tobago is a member of the TQF Management Committee. He attended the meetings in Vancouver, August 2009.
Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open School Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Lystra Sampson-Ovid of the Ministry of Education was one of 22 partners who signed the Constitution.

COMOSA held its first Annual General Meeting in Delhi on November 21, 2010. The COMOSA website at http://comosa.org/wordpress/ was launched. COMOSA’s activities for the next three years include research, gender and vocational and technical education. Lystra Sampson-Ovid of the Ministry of Education attended the AGM.

Trinidad & Tobago was one of six countries that took part in the “OER for Open Schools” programme. Activities included:

- Attended the Steering Committee Meeting in Gaborone, Botswana in September 2009.
- Establishing Country Management Committees. Dr. Olabisi Kuboni was appointed the Trinidad & Tobago Country Consultant.
- Participating in intensive training workshops on developing print and online open educational resources. “Master Teachers” trained in these workshops developed course materials for five secondary-level subjects.
- Use of Basecamp for regular communication among team members collaborating on materials development after the workshop would be conducted via Basecamp.
- Anisworth Ovid of the University of Trinidad & Tobago and Steve Headley of the National Open School, Trinidad & Tobago attended a 10-day Moodle Workshop in Namibia in October 2010.
- Completion of print and electronic open educational resources (OER) for five subjects at the secondary level.
- Training continues to “cascade” from Master Teachers to other educators in Trinidad & Tobago through in-country workshops.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OER was held in Delhi in November 2009. Lystra Sampson-Ovid of the Ministry of Education, Trinidad & Tobago and ODL practitioners from over 20 countries attended the workshop.

Lystra Sampson-Ovid attended a workshop on Integrating, Vocational and General or Academic Education in Botswana in July 2011.

The National Open School of Trinidad & Tobago (NOSTT) is participating in three COMOSA research studies:

- Online learning success variations/factors,
- Integrating vocational and academic education, and
- Gender audit on open schooling.

COL sponsored a Gender-Sensitive ICT Strategy Workshop for Open Schooling in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2011. One of the purposes of the workshop was to promote understanding and discussion around the role of gender and ICT in Open Schools. Henry Paul of the Ministry of Education attended the workshop.

COL organised a Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop for NOSTT in September 2011 in Port of Spain and a workshop to align the NOSTT Strategic Plan with the new Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education. Representatives from NOSTT, the Distance Education Unit, Planning Division, Monitoring and Evaluation, the University of the West Indies Open Campus, the Distance Learning Unit and COL Focal Point Lystra Sampson-Ovid attended both workshops.
COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The “OER for Open Schools” Steering Committee meeting was held in Seychelles on 1 March 2012. All member countries have committed to implement the OER policy. Members have also agreed to write a book on the experience for 2012/2013.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Lystra Sampson-Ovid attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop, Steering Committee meeting and launch.

Teacher Education

Trinidad & Tobago was one of ten countries selected to participate in the UNICEF-COL Child-Friendly School (CFS) project. The CFS Project Point Person in Trinidad & Tobago was Milen Kidane, Chief Protection Specialist, UNICEF, Trinidad & Tobago. The University of the Southern Caribbean (USC) was the main partner institution. A consultative meeting was held in February 2011 and an Action Plan for the implementation of the CFS project in Trinidad & Tobago was developed. However, Trinidad & Tobago is no longer participating in CFS.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, with support from COL, organised a two-day regional consultation meeting on Professional and Academic Standards in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. Dr. Jennifer Yamin-Ali of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus attended the meeting. The consultation document, “Regional Standards of Practice for The Teaching Profession: Draft Framework of Generic Teaching Performance Standards and Academic Standards”, was submitted to COL in May 2011.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, COL held the 2nd Meeting of the CARICOM Consultation on Teaching Standards in Trinidad & Tobago in September 2011. John Roopchan and Sherma Hyatali of the Ministry of Education; June Gorge of the University of West Indies; and Curtis Floyd and Ronald Brunton of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad & Tobago attended the meeting.

Higher Education

COL sponsored Steve Warner of Trinidad & Tobago to take the Master of Instructional Design and Technology online programme offered by the Open University Malaysia.

COL was one of the sponsors of the Regional Higher Education Conference held in St. Lucia in March 2010. Over 50 delegates from the region had the opportunity to deliberate the higher education provision in the Eastern Caribbean States. COL supported Dr. Zameer Mohamed of the University of Trinidad & Tobago to the conference.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

A request for assistance in capacity building for OLD was made by the Metal Industry Company (MIC). This led to an ongoing collaboration with the Distance Learning Secretariat in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. As a result, COL organised a workshop to develop capacity in writing
print-based materials for self-study according to sound Instructional Design (ID) principles, using the COL Template, in Trinidad & Tobago in May/June 2010. Cipriani Davis, Anthony Corbin, Reynold John, Kenneth Samlal, Samuel Bacchus, Donna Bachoo, Dean Smart, Anthony Sam and Mark Sandy of MIC attended the workshop.

**Learning for Farming**

Following the Focal Point’s recommendation, COL met Dr. Laura Roberts-Nkrumah of UWI in June 2011 and finalised the contents for the recertification programme for the extension officers. A meeting with banks, marketing agencies, mobile companies and university personnel was held to discuss the scope of L3F in Trinidad & Tobago in agriculture and fishery. COL was asked to develop a framework for L3F in Trinidad & Tobago.

**Healthy Communities**


**Integrated eLearning**

In collaboration with SchoolNet SA, COL introduced the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI), an Advanced Certificate in Education for teachers and school leaders wishing to focus on information and communication technology (ICT) integration into school management, teaching and learning.

A COL consultant, Gerald Roos visited Trinidad & Tobago in September 2010 and introduced CCTI to Ministry of Education management and the ICT in Education Team. He also developed a policy and rollout plans for the use of ICT in Education and a short-term plan for the Laptop for Schools Initiative, initiated by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education in Trinidad & Tobago has adopted the CCTI to train their teachers and subject advisors in the integration of ICT into teaching and learning.

A series of OER capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Michael Bradshaw of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad & Tobago attended the workshop in Namibia in May 2010. The fourth workshop took place on 23 November 2010 in Kochi, India, coinciding with PCF6. Lystra Sampson-Ovid, Ministry of Education, attended the workshop and participated in PCF6.

In October 2010, COL, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft signed a collaboration agreement to support the implementation of ICT in education in the Caribbean. Microsoft has agreed to offer to Caribbean countries (including Trinidad & Tobago) participating in the “Partners in Learning” programme discounted software licences on Microsoft products. Learners will be able to access free e-mail addresses through Microsoft’s Live@edu, a suite of online hosted services designed for and offered to educational institutions at no cost to the institution. Karen Rosemin and Lystra Sampson-Ovid attended the initiative launch in March 2011 at the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean) in Trinidad & Tobago.

An ICT in Education Survey was conducted in the Caribbean. The Minister of Education nominated Henry Paul, ICT Systems Coordinator, Ministry of Education to develop the country report for Trinidad & Tobago. The final survey report consisting of eight country reports (including Trinidad & Tobago) and a final summary report with regional trends was published.
COL facilitated an eGovernment and eBusiness Strategy Development Workshop for the Caribbean in Antigua & Barbuda in March 2011. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). Representatives from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, the CARICAD and the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators attended the workshop.

COL and UNESCO, with financial support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, conducted a project “Fostering Governmental Support for Open Educational Resources Internationally” to raise awareness of OER beyond the communities of practice that had already developed around them. A Regional Forum for the Caribbean OER was held in Barbados in conjunction with the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in January 2012. This resulted in a 2012 World OER Congress at which the Paris Declaration on OER was adopted by the international community.

COL organised an ICT in Education Leadership Forum on “Teachers’ Creativity and Innovation: a Key to Success in the Caribbean” in January 2012. Participants explored how the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (CFT) has enhanced ICT integration into teaching and learning.

Kathleen Thomas, Angela Sinaswee-Gervais and Gaynelle Holdip of the Ministry of Education and Karen Rosemin attended both Forums.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Professor Sankat, Jennifer Sampson of the University of Trinidad & Tobago, Margaret Richardson, Permanent Secretary Tertiary, Karen Rosemin, Trinidad & Tobago’s Focal Point for COL, The Hon. Burchell Whiteman, Chair of the Board of COL, then COL’s President Sir John Daniel and approximately 100 representatives of UWI, the Trinidad & Tobago Government and Trinidad & Tobago institutions attended a COL Stakeholders Meeting at UWI in November 2009. The aim of the meeting was to stimulate a discussion of COL’s work in Trinidad & Tobago.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Karen Rosemin of MSTTE and COL Focal Point; Lystra Sampson-Ovid of the Ministry of Education and COL Focal Point; Laura Roberts-Nkrumah of the Ministry of Education; Anil Ramnanan of UWI and Steve Warner of Waterloo S.S. to the Forum.

Karen Rosemin and Lystra Sampson-Ovid, Focal Points for Trinidad & Tobago, attended the COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Caribbean), organised by COL and co-hosted by MSTTE, in Trinidad & Tobago in March 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015.

Sir John Daniel delivered a lecture on “The Future of Universities: New Dynamics of Development” at the Distinguished Lecture Series, organised by the University of West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, on 29 March 2011.
The Honourable Fazal Karim, Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, Trinidad & Tobago attended the AAOU Conference in Penang, Malaysia in September 2011, with arrangements facilitated by COL.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Two learners participated in the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2009,
- One learner participated in the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- Three learners participated in the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2010,
- One learner participated in the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011,
- One learner participated in the International Development Bank Effective Writing course in 2011, and
- One learner participated in the International Labour Organization Effective Writing course in 2011.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Trinidad & Tobago for 2012-2015 are:

- Open Schooling: expanding and formalising the Open School model and supporting its adoption in other Caribbean states,
- Teacher education: promoting the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT integration amongst teacher training institutions and supporting its adoption in the Ministry of Education,
- VUSSC,
- Skills development,
- Healthy communities,
- Learning for Farmers, and
- Quality assurance.
PACIFIC

Kiribati | Nauru | Papua New Guinea | Samoa | Solomon Islands | Tonga | Tuvalu | Vanuatu
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

As a region comprising of small island states, the Commonwealth Pacific faces distinct challenges. Most countries have limited resources to support a large education and training infrastructure. The University of the South Pacific (USP) reaches a wide range of learners through open and distance learning (ODL), but there remains a pressing need to increase economic productivity and literacy levels throughout the Pacific region.

COL is working with partners in the region to apply its expertise in ODL and information and communication technology (ICT) to help address education and development needs in the Pacific. COL’s regional activities include the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth, expanding open schooling, teacher training, the post-graduate Legislative Drafting degree programme, flexible skills development and community learning.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Eight Commonwealth Pacific nations are members of VUSSC, a collaborative network of 33 small states committed to the development of free content resources for use in an educational context. Samoa has hosted two VUSSC international training and materials development workshops in 2007 and 2009. The 2009 workshop on Transport and Logistics focusing on Stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa from 23 November-11 December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of participants in ICT and content development using ODL as well as developing content for the course. Numerous educators from the Pacific have attended VUSSC training workshops.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk study report, “Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-Chance Education in the Pacific”, which explores the nature and scale of school dropouts and out-of-school youth and adults in Pacific Island countries. It provides 11 individual country reports along with a combined overview of education issues and patterns. The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific.

COL is supporting the establishment of new open schools in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

COL hosted the Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum in Tonga in November 2011.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries, including several
from Pacific countries, attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave presentations on specific topics at the launch.

Representatives from USP attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop and launch.

**Teacher Education**

A Consultative Meeting, the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in selected Commonwealth countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands), was held in Solomon Islands from 28-30 June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers, using ODL strategies.

**Higher Education**

USP, Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. In 2009, COL supported the programme by providing 12 scholarships. In 2010, COL provided 15 Legislative Drafting scholarships to learners in the Pacific.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL facilitated the establishment of the Pacific Association for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET) and the creation of Basic Skills courses that are being shared throughout the Pacific islands.

A materials development workshop for vocational literacy was held in Samoa in June-July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber.

COL facilitated a course planning workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials in Port Vila, Vanuatu from 3-5 October 2010. The workshop was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council.

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand from 13-17 June. The participants evaluated pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules, and considered next steps and action plans.
Healthy Communities

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a community radio workshop for education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in February 2010 in Bangalore, India. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned of community radio in Asia-Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity.

The Bangalore Declaration was created at the conference and passed by the AMARC Asia-Pacific general assembly. It is a collective statement of participants’ beliefs and commitments, including the use of community radio as a tool for non-formal education and food security.

GENDER

Gender equality is a cross-cutting corporate goal for COL. The advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to COL’s agenda of Learning for Development. COL is working to ensure it is a model organisation that mainstreams gender in all its processes and at all levels.

COL’s Gender micro-site provides Commonwealth countries with a one-stop, comprehensive platform to access print and electronic resources on gender and ODL with a special emphasis on ICT. COL supported the development of gender-sensitive vocational literacy learning materials and highlighted female participation in vocational literacy training in the Pacific.

REGIONAL PRESENCE

COL maintains strong relationships with many stakeholders in the Pacific, including member governments, partner institutions, donors and individuals. COL’s Honorary Advisors, a network of eminent ODL professionals, includes four representatives from the Pacific. The region is also represented by a network of individuals, selected by member Governments, who liaise directly with COL as Focal Points. COL creates specific country action plans and country reports to ensure the region’s needs are addressed.

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) organised by COL and co-hosted by the Wellington Institute of Technology, the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held from 1-3 November 2011 in Auckland, New Zealand. The meeting is held once every three years. Focal Points share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. The key priorities identified at the Pacific Focal Points Meeting were:

- Flexible approaches to TVET,
- Expanding community learning programmes,
- Capacity building in the development and use of OER,
- Introducing COL’s Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme,
- Supporting mLearning, and
- Launching the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration (CCTI) in the Pacific.
REGIONAL BROCHURES

COL has regional brochures that summarise its activities in each of the four regions of the Commonwealth. These can be found on COL’s website at www.col.org/regional.
KIRIBATI

COL Focal Point: Ms. Karabi Bate, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

Kiribati is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 100,000 spread over islands and atolls covering an immense expansion of ocean. Kiribati is a contributor to COL’s budget.

Ms. Maria Teretia Kaiboia, the former Acting Director of Education at the Ministry of Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2008-2010.

SUMMARY

COL’s work with Kiribati is primarily through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Kiribati was represented at COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Kiribati is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. Tereeao Teingin, of the University of the South Pacific (USP) Campus Kiribati, conducted a desk review and prepared a country report on “Second Chance Education in Kiribati”.
The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Kiribati.

The USP Campus in Kiribati established an open school in August 2011. Tebwaatoki Tabetia of the Ministry of Education and Teereeao Teingia of the Kiribati USP Campus attended the Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum in November 2011.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop.

The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch.

Tereeao Teingia of the University of the South Pacific attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop and the launch.

Higher Education

USP Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until 28 February 2013. In 2010, COL supported 15 students. Birimaka Tekanene of Kiribati completed the programme.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Integrating eLearning

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from May 1-2, 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: how explored how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; reviewed the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. The Honourable Minister of Education, Maera Tauanei, Toaiti Taranta of the Ministry of Education and M. Tauanei of the Kiribati Teachers College attended the Forum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops prior to the Forum.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Karabi Bate of the Ministry of Education and Interim COL Focal Point.
The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Karabi Bate, Kiribati’s Focal Point for COL, was invited to the meeting.

LOOKING FORWARD

Kiribati will continue to benefit from COL’s activities in the Pacific region in 2012-2015. Kiribati’s involvement in VUSSC could contribute to human resource development in the country.
NAURU

COL Focal Point: Dr. Maria Gaiyabu, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

Nauru is a small state of the Commonwealth and the world’s smallest independent republic with a population of 9,300 and covering just 21 sq. km. Literacy rates are high, and the University of the South Pacific (USP) has a campus on the island. Nauru contributed regularly to COL’s budget in the triennium 2009-2012.

Mr. Michael Longhurst, the former Director of Education at the Ministry of Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2010.

SUMMARY

Nauru is benefiting from COL’s work in the region, providing materials and capacity building support for assuring quality in education and teacher education programmes. COL is contributing to vocational literacy in Nauru.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Nauru has joined the 32 small states of the Commonwealth that are taking part in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), which would increase access to tertiary education while building capacity among educators.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a report on “Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific”. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. Professor Salanieta Bakalevu of School of Education, USP, Nauru was the project coordinator.
The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Nauru.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa in June 2010. Participants were trained in writing for open and distance learning (ODL) and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in “Working with Concrete” and “Working with Timber”.

Cecilia Giouba of Nauru Secondary School and Maria Weibeya of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Nauru attended the workshop.

Nauru submitted a proposal for the delivery of an ODL course in vocational literacy and trade training. COL supported the Department of Education to deliver the Vocational Literacy and Working with Concrete Basic Trade Training in 14 districts. Of 218 learners ages 16-35 who started on the programme, 171 students (78%) completed the Literacy course and 167 students (77%) completed the Concrete course. The cohorts include 83% male students and 17% female students.

Integrating eLearning

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from May 1-2, 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: how explored how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; reviewed the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. Purecella Engar of the Nauru Department of Education and Kylie Notte of Nauru College attended the Forum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. Held every three years, this meeting provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country, and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Dr. Maria Gaiyabu, Nauru’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. In 2012-2015, Nauru will continue to benefit from COL’s activities in the region in both Education and Livelihoods & Health.
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

COL Focal Points:  Mr. Ouka Lavaki, Ministry of Education
                  Mr. Charles Mabia, Ministry of Higher Education

BACKGROUND

The largest of the Pacific Island countries, Papua New Guinea has a population of about 6.7 million but is still considered a small state of the Commonwealth. Papua New Guinea faces numerous development challenges, many of them related to health and natural resource management. COL’s work in Papua New Guinea is the most extensive in the Pacific region; the country participates fully in regional and pan-Commonwealth initiatives. Papua New Guinea has been contributing to COL’s budget.

The Honourable Dame Dr. Carol Kidu of Papua New Guinea is the Pacific Representative on COL’s Board of Governors.

Professor Dr. Abdul Mannan of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) is an Honorary COL Advisor.

SUMMARY

Papua New Guinea is active in several key COL programmes, including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA), Lifelong Learning for Farmers, healthy communities and skills development.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Papua New Guinea is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.
COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the TQF Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. Pongie Kichawen of UNPG attended the meetings and helped in developing the qualifications framework.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Dr. Kichawen attended the meeting.

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Dr. Abdul Mannan of UPNG Open College was one of 22 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

The Quality Assurance Toolkit for Open Schools was launched during the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. The Toolkit will be used in all the countries with COMOSA to develop their institutional Quality Assurance frameworks.

The UPNG Open College is participating in the Gender Audit on Open Schooling.

The COL workshop on copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Professor Dr. Mannan of the UPNG Open College and open and distance learning (ODL) practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

Teacher Education

A Curriculum Development Workshop was held in Papua New Guinea in July 2009. Representatives from the Office of Higher Education, the University of Goroka, the PNG Education Institute, the Divine Word University, the University of Technology and UPNG attended the workshop.

Higher Education

The University of the South Pacific (USP), Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. Ephreddie Ephraim Jubille, Marleen Toliman Akop and Simon Alberic of Papua New Guinea have successfully completed the legislative programme.

UNPG has signed a licence agreement with COL to use the Commonwealth Executive MBA/MBA (CEMBA/MPA) materials in its Masters programme. Bernard Esonu of UPNG attended the CEMBA/MPA workshop on case-based teaching in Malaysia from 29 November- 1 December 2011.

The CEMBA/MPA Academic Board and the CEMBA/MPA Executive Governing Board both met in August 2010 in Penang, Malaysia. Professor Albert Mellam of UNPG is a member of the Academic Board and Professor Ross A. Hynes is as a member of Executive Governing Board for 2010-2012.
LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

Through a series of workshops and meetings, COL brought together a group of institutions for strengthening the Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative. The Ministry of Community Development, PNG Microfinance Ltd, PNG Women in Agriculture, NARI and Fresh Produce Development Association have agreed to participate in the programme.

PNG Microfinance has started working with the women groups and farmers. A team from PNG visited India. Based on their experiences, they developed a roadmap for L3F in PNG. Meetings between COL and AUSAID were held, and AUSAID has shown interest in the L3F initiative.

A framework for L3F was developed and discussed among various partners. COL has facilitated the National Agricultural Research Institute to initiate L3F among PNG Women in Agriculture (PNGWiA) and farmers of Central Province.

During 2012, COL had meetings with the University of Natural Resources & Environment and the PNG Microfinance Expansion Project to strengthen L3F in PNG.

Skills Development

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa from 21 June - 2 July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber.

Dr. Willy Ako and Stephanie Ehari of the PNG Office of Higher Education attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials. This was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October 2010 and was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council. Jay Banda of the Department of Education and Dr. Willy Ako attended the workshop, and the Department of Technical Education in the Ministry of Higher Education piloted the course. Mr. Banda has requested support for the development of Flexible ODL policy in technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated the pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules and considered next steps and action plans. Mr. Banda attended the workshop.

Healthy Communities

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in February 2010 in Bangalore, India. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned new awareness of community radio in Asia-Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills in using community media as part of disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity.

The Bangalore Declaration was passed by the AMARC Asia-Pacific general assembly. It is a collective statement of participants’ beliefs and commitments, including the use of community radio as a tool for non-
formal education and food security. COL sponsored Aloysius Laukai of New Dawn FM, PNG to the workshop and conference.

COL has supported the development of a community learning programme in Bougainville concerning women’s health and development. Working with the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, COL conducted a programme design workshop with 20 representatives of media, health, development and education groups from the public, private and civil society sectors, including the Ministry of Community Affairs and Women, the Bougainville Interchurch Council, the Buka Hospital, Buka Municipality and New Dawn FM. The workshop resulted in the design of Bugenvil Mere Tede, a community learning programme that combines educational media content and face-to-face interactions. Bugenvil Mere Tede has been broadcast weekly since October 2010, with face-to-face learner support and mobilisation provided by the women’s network of the Bougainville Interchurch Council. A five-day follow-up mentoring visit was conducted by the Regional Media Centre in April 2011.

In support of the work done by New Dawn FM and partners in the Bugenvil Mere Tede programme, COL supported a workshop on Integrating Mobile Telephones into Community Learning Programmes. Thirteen representatives of health, development, policy and media groups participated in the three-day training, which covered mobile telephones as a distinct form of communication, examples of how mobiles are being used to support learning and development, a review of ICT applications that use mobiles and brainstorming about ways that mobiles can be used. Following the workshop, New Dawn FM launched a mobile news service, with an initial focus on local elections. Over 800 SMS requests for information were received on the first night.

COL facilitated a second community learning programme design workshop in Bougainville in November 2011. Representatives from Hak’o’ Women’s Collective (Youth), New Dawn FM, the Health Division, the Ministry of Community Development, the Bougainville InterChurch Council – Women’s Forum and the Ministry of Education collaborated to design 20 weeks of programming, including use of mobiles, learner support and a management structure.

COL supported the participation of Aloysius Laukai from New Dawn FM as a trainer-facilitator in a 10-day training of trainers workshop run in April 2012 by the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and UNESCO.

Integrating eLearning

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from May 1-2, 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: integrating ICT into teaching and learning in the Pacific; review of the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; policies and practices in education to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. Thomas Podarua and Walipe Winge of the PNG Department of Education attended the Forum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Then COL President Sir John Daniel made a video presentation on “Celebrating Open Schooling” and Sir John and COL Vice President (now President) Professor Asha Kanwar made a video presentation on “Open Education Resources: Next Steps” for the PNGADE Conference held at the Divine World University in Madang, PNG in June 2011.

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes,
namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Kipli Joan Minol of UPNG and Dr. Pongie Kichawen of UPNG.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Ouka Lavaki, PNG’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner from PNG took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009,
- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the eLearning course on Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) in 2010, and
- Three learners took the World Health Organization Effective Writing course in 2011.

Gibson Gotacha from the Ministry of Finance was engaged as a COL e-tutor providing one-on-one tutoring via Moodle for CSDRMS eLearning.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by PNG for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing institutional capacity through training and start an attachment/study visit,
- Developing a policy framework for teacher training through ODL,
- Developing in-country capacity for ICT-enhanced learning,
- Promoting the OER movement and in-country collaboration for content development, and
- Supporting the establishment of the PNG Open University.
BACKGROUND

A small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 180,000, Samoa benefits from COL’s activities in the region including those associated with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education (PATVET).

Ruby Vaa of the University of the South Pacific, Alafua Campus, was an Honorary COL Advisor from 2009-2012.

SUMMARY

COL works with partners in Samoa on several key initiatives; in particular, the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), teacher education and skills development.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Samoa is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The team leaders meeting, in preparation for the Apia workshop (see below), was held in Vancouver, Canada in October 2009. Five team leaders attended the meeting. They included Leulua’itumua Fatu Tiperio Lafoa’i of Samoa. In planning for the workshop the team leaders drafted and agreed on a framework for the workshop.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics (focusing on stevedoring) was held in Apia, Samoa from 23 November-11 December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Leulua’itumua Fatu Lafoa’i (Team Leader nomination), Sonny Brown, Tauvaga Vaai, David Asi, Sakaria Leatuaoa, Siaosi Wongkee
and Samuel Phineas of the School of Maritime Training, Institute of Technology National University of Samoa attended the workshop.

The VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in preparation for the Male workshop (see below) was held in Singapore in collaboration with the National Institute of Education at the Nanyang University of Singapore. The team leaders included Lineta Tamikaiyaro of Samoa.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants attended the workshop to develop a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Lineta Tamikaiyaro of University of Samoa attended the workshop.

The 9th VUSSC training in materials development workshop for the development of a Bachelor’s Degree in Business and Entrepreneurship was held in Lesotho in March 2011. Sui Tinai and Sasae Walter of the National University of Samoa attended the workshop.

Ms. Tinai also attended the 9th VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting in Singapore in February 2011, to prepare and train the team leaders for the workshop in Lesotho.

A VUSSC Team Leaders Meeting was held in Singapore in November 2011 to prepare and train the team leaders for the 10th VUSSC training and materials development workshop in Educational Leadership. The workshop was also held in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011. Lina Schuster (Team Leader from Samoa) attended the meeting and workshop. Dr. Rasela Tufue-Dolgoy participated in the workshop.

Ms. Anita Latai of the National University of Samoa attended the materials development and training workshop at the University of Seychelles in March 2012. Dr. Emma Kruse-Vaai participated in the VUSSC Management Committee meeting prior to the workshop.

Dr. Emma Kruse-Vaai of the University of Samoa enrolled in the VUSSC Managing and Facilitating Online Instruction course. Jacob Phillips and Kapeni Matatia Jr. of the National University of Samoa signed up for the VUSSC LINUX Online Training Course.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

A Management Committee is now directing VUSSC’s activities, supported by COL’s Education Specialist for VUSSC, John Lesperance. The committee includes representatives from small states in all regions of the Commonwealth. Dr. Emma Kruse-Vaai of Samoa is the Chairperson of the Management Committee.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Sinapi Moli of the Samoa Qualifications Authority and Dr. Emma Kruse-Vaai of the National University of Samoa attended the meeting.

The 2nd VUSSC Management Committee Meeting and the VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting were held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Dr. Kruse-Vaai attended both meetings.
Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. Ruby Vaa, USP Alafua Campus, conducted a desk review and prepared a country report on Second Chance Education in Samoa. The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Samoa.

Marie Toalepaialii of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture and Ruby Vaa of the USP Alafua Campus attended the Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum in Tonga in November 2011.

Teacher Education

A Curriculum Development workshop was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in July 2009. Hobert Sasa, Lina Visinia and Iosefa Leiataua of the National University of Samoa attended the workshop.

A Consultative Meeting, the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands), was held in the Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth of Learning on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers, using ODL strategies. Tuvaetasi Epenesa Esera, National University of Samoa, Faamau Finauga, Primary Curriculum Officer and Taaloga Faasalaina, Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture attended the meeting.

Higher Education

USP, Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. In 2009, COL supported the programme by providing 12 scholarships. Four Samoan scholars sponsored by COL have successfully completed the programme. COL supported 15 students in 2010; three Samoans completed the programme.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL supported a materials development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa from 21 June-2 July, 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber. Four participants from the Institute of Technology, National University of Samoa (NUS) and one from Oloamanu Centre, NUS attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a course planning workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials. This was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October 2010 and was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council. G.T.T. Afamasaga attended the workshop. The National University of Samoa piloted the course.

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated the pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course,
collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules, and considered next steps and action plans. G.T.T. Afamasaga attended the workshop.

In August 2011, COL facilitated a workshop in planning for distance education for the Oloamanu Centre for Professional Development at the University of Samoa. Tauvaga Vaai, Iosefa Leiatua, G.T.T. Afamasaga and Dr. Selipa Selipa attended the workshop.

**Integrating eLearning**

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from 1-2 May 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond in order to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. The Honourable Magele Mauiliu Magele, Minister for Education, Sports and Culture and Rosemarie Esera of the Ministry attended the Forum.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops. Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Dr. Emma Kruse-Vaai of the National University of Samoa.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. G.T.T. Afamasage, Samoa’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners from the Samoa Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Reporting Management System (CSDRMS) eLearning course in 2010.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Samoa for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing a policy for distance and flexible learning for Samoa, and
- Continuing to support infrastructure such as School Net for all schools,
- Developing core modules and training for developing the capacity and skills of National University of Samoa staff and teachers to develop learning materials for students in blended modalities for distance and flexible learning,
- Training teachers at various levels to use and develop supportive online materials,
- Creating a support unit within the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture – Curriculum, Materials Assessment Division – that can provide pedagogical and technical support to teachers using ICT in the delivery of curriculum, and
- Nonformal ODL capacity development for media and development (livelihoods and health) partners.
SOLOMON ISLANDS

COL Focal Point: Mr. Bernard Rapasia, Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development

BACKGROUND

Solomon Islands is a small state of the Commonwealth consisting of nearly 1,000 islands with a population of about half a million people. It faces significant development and educational challenges and is a major focus of NZ Aid Programme Support. The University of the South Pacific (USP) has a campus on the Solomon Islands. Solomon Islands has contributed to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Solomon Islands participates in the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and hosted a VUSSC workshop in 2010. Solomon Islands also takes part in COL initiatives in teacher education, open schooling, higher education, skills development and community health. One of COL’s leading community learning programme initiatives is based in Isabel Province, Solomon Islands.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Solomon Islands is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants attended the workshop to develop a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. May Tana Pitakere of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE), School of Natural Resources, attended the workshop.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Christina Bakolo attended the meeting.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. Stanley Houma conducted desk review and prepared a country report on “Second Chance Education in Solomon Islands”. The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Solomon Islands.

Hilma Mollomb of the SICHE and Irene Anigafutu of the USP Solomon Islands Campus attended the Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum in November 2011. They are running the pilot.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch. Irene Anigafutu of USP attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop and launch.

Teacher Education

A Curriculum Development Meeting was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in July 2009. Timothy Omani and James Porakari of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education attended the workshop.

A Consultative Meeting, the first phase of the Capacity Building Programme on Multigrade Teaching for Teachers in Selected Commonwealth Countries (Belize, Maldives, Namibia, Samoa and Solomon Islands), was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands in June 2010. The capacity building initiative aims to strengthen the current work of the Commonwealth Secretariat and COL on multigrade teaching through the design and implementation of a programme to support teachers, using open and distance learning (ODL) strategies. Mark Tehe of the Teacher Training Division, Mylyn Kuve of the Ministry of Education, Janine Simi of HOE/SICHE, Hilma Mollomb of SICHE and Elvis Kekegolo of the Teacher Education Office attended the meeting.

Higher Education

The University of the South Pacific (USP), Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. In 2009, COL supported the programme by providing 12 scholarships. Six scholars from Solomon Islands sponsored by COL completed the
programme. COL supported 15 students in 2010; five students from Solomon Islands completed the programme.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL has been sub-contracted by Linpico Sarl of France to do a Distance Learning Policy Study in the Solomon Islands. Linpico has a service contract with the European Commission, which is supporting the Education Sector in the Solomon Islands.

The consultancy was held from 15 November-5 December 2009. COL and the consultant, Greville Rumble, drafted a national Distance and Flexible Learning (DFL) policy and strategic framework for the Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development to support their intention to introduce DFL throughout the education and training system. Cabinet approved policy and strategic framework in October 2011.

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa from 21 June-2 July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber. Benedict Kausua of TVET Division of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and Sherilyn Faabasua of the Literary Association of Solomon Islands attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a course planning workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials. This was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October 2010 and was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council. Benedict Kausua attended the workshop, and TVET Division piloted the course.

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules, and considered next steps and action plans. Benedict Kausua attended the workshop. The Solomon Islands TVET Division plans to roll out the vocational literacy course during 2012.

Healthy Communities

David Leeming, Solomon Islands attended the International training-of-trainers workshop in Vancouver, Canada in September-October 2009. Key national and regional partners from different Commonwealth regions advanced the three-year plan for COL’s Healthy Communities initiative (also linking it to UNESCO’s work in this area in the upcoming programme biennium (2010-2011). Partners’ knowledge and skills in developing non-formal ODL programming were increased through a trainers train themselves approach. Various approaches were reviewed and analysed, e.g. participatory content creation (India), use of drama (Jamaica, Malawi) and community ODL programmes (Jamaica, Tanzania). Strategies and tools were reviewed and plans made concerning the International Peer Group, Community Media Space on WikiEducator.

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in February 2010 in Bangalore, India. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes. They also learned new awareness of community radio in Asia Pacific and its potential contributions to local development, education, governance, knowledge and skills in using community media as part of disaster management,
climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity. COL sponsored Anthony Matelaomao of People First Network to attend the workshop and conference.

Eight representatives of the health promotion department of the Isabel Provincial Government, Isabel Provincial Health Services, Solomon Islands Health Promotion Department, Susubona FM Radio Committee and Tataba FM radio station participated in a three-day workshop in developing community learning programmes, organised by COL and the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community held in Honiara in August 2010. The workshop resulted in an outline plan for a second round of health education programmes to be carried out in Isabel in 2011-12.

A programme development process was run in Isabel between September 2009 and June 2010. Local assessment for the development of community learning programmes was carried in Isabel Province in September 2009. A programme design workshop was held in October in Buala in which 20 representatives of local community media groups, the provincial government and health services, SICHE and also the Health Promotion Division participated in the workshop where they shared reports and programme designs. Four new health related learning programmes were designed by groups combining local health, media and education representatives. Three community learning programmes were delivered in Buala, Tataba and Susubona communities in Isabel Province on environmental health, youth reproductive health and diabetes respectively. Follow-up workshops were carried out in four communities (Buala, Kia, Tataba, and Susubona) between May 2009 and November 2010. An interactive website was established to further content and information sharing and exchange; the website builds on the success of a group email list – Isabel Learning Network – established in 2009, which has some 85 members from Isabel, other provinces in the Solomon Islands, regionally and internationally.

A one-day policy feedback meeting was held in Honiara in August 2010, organised by the Solomon Islands Development Trust in which the experiences of the Isabel Learning Network were presented and discussed. Policymakers from the ministries of health, education and rural development were engaged in discussions about moving community media and educational programming forward in Isabel and more widely in the Solomon Islands.

Jennifer Wate from the Solomon Islands Development Trust attended the Healthy Community partners workshop in Cape Town in September 2011. The workshop brought together 14 partners from around the Commonwealth to further develop the models and approaches that guide COL’s work with non-formal learning using media/mobiles, share experiences of community learning and train each other in the use of useful tools and approaches, and refine strategies and plans for Healthy Communities initiatives in the next Three-Year Plan.

COL provided support to the Isabel Provincial Government to conduct training and organisational development for stations in the Isabel community media network between March 2011 and June 2012:

- A network planning meeting took place in May 2011, followed by mentoring visits to local community meetings.
- A five-day training workshop was executed by the Regional Media Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in January 2012 with a focus on content development and production skills. Twenty people participated from seven community media groups, the provincial health services, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, the Isabel Investment Corporation, and Save the Children.
- The January 2012 workshop resulted in new knowledge and skills among a consortium of different partners as well as content design for 26 weeks of programming.

**Integrating eLearning**

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from 1-2 May 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; the issues, challenges and
initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond in order to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. Matthew Timothy Ngele of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Mike Haukaria of Solomon Islands Education Management Information System and Mark Tehe of the School of Education attended the Forum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops. Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Christina Bakolo of the National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and Elvis Zhivago Kekegolo of the same Ministry.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Bernard Rapasia, Solomon Islands’ Focal Point for COL, was invited to the meeting.

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Three learners from the Solomon Islands Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) eLearning course in 2010.

LOOKING FORWARD

Solomon Islands will continue to benefit from participation in COL’s activities and capacity building in the region in 2012-2015.
TONGA

COL Focal Point: Mrs. Peaua Heimuli, Tonga Institute of Higher Education

BACKGROUND

The Kingdom of Tonga is a small state of the Commonwealth comprised of 176 islands with a population of just over 100,000. Tonga has made good progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and recognises the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to support development and education. Tonga contributes to COL’s budget.

Mrs. Siatukimoana Vaea, the former Principal of the Tonga Institute of Higher Education, was the Focal Point for COL from 2009-2010.

SUMMARY

Tonga participates in several COL activities including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), regional capacity building initiatives and skills development programmes.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:
- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Tonga is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The Team leaders meeting, in preparation for the Apia workshop was held in Vancouver, Canada in October 2009. Five Team leaders including Sateki Manu of Tonga attended the meeting. In planning for the workshop the team leaders drafted and agreed on a framework for the workshop.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November-December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development using ODL as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Sateki Manu (Team Leader
Nomination) and Vilimi Vakautapola Vi of the Tonga Maritime Polytechnical Institute, Ministry of Training, Youth & Sports attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010 and hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Isikeli Ngulu of the Ministry of Education, Women’s Affairs and Culture attended the workshop.

Siofilisi Hingano and Liuaki Fusitu’a of Tonga attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in Educational Leadership in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the TQF Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Dr. ‘Uhila moe Langi Fasi of the Tonga National Qualification and Accreditation Board attended the meeting.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. Sela Kakala Havae and Elizabeth Love, University of the South Pacific (USP) Campus Tonga conducted desk review and prepared a country report on Second Chance Education in Tonga.

The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Tonga.

An open school was established in Tonga in August 2011. The Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum was held in Tonga in November 2011. Representatives from the Ministry of Education, Women’s Affairs and Culture, Tonga, Tupou High School, Tailulu College, LDS High School, St. Andrews High School, Apifo’ou College, Lavengamalie High School, Seven Day Adventist High School and USP Tonga Campus attended the Forum.

COL organised the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA) Annual General Meeting in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012.

COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for Open Schools in Seychelles on 1-2 March 2012. The face-to-face workshop was preceded by two online workshops. A draft “COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy” was prepared at the end of the workshop. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials was held on 2 March 2012. As a celebration of the achievement of countries, representatives gave a presentation on a specific topic at the launch.

Dr. ‘Ana Hau’alofa’ia Koloto of USP attended the COMOSA AGM and eMM workshop, OER and Copyright Policy workshop and launch.

Higher Education

USP, Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013.
In 2009, COL supported the programme by providing 12 scholarships. COL-sponsored scholar, Annis Fapuiaki Finau of Tonga, has successfully completed the programme. COL supported 15 students in 2010; one student from Tonga completed the programme.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa in June/July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber.

Nonga Soakai and Sinama Fa’anunu of the Tonga Institute of Science and Technology attended the workshop.

**Healthy Communities**

COL supported the Regional Media Centre (RMC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in running an introductory workshop for a community broadcasting facility in Niuatoputapu in May 2010. A programme schedule was established, and representatives of a variety of local groups were trained in broadcasting skills. RMC conducted a follow-up visit in April 2011, in which numerous gaps in capacity and problems with operation of the station were identified.

**Integrating eLearning**

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from May 1-2, 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: explored how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; reviewed the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. Claude Tupou of the Ministry of Education, Women’s Affairs and Culture and Kuyaju Fysut’A of the Tonga Institute of Higher Education attended the Forum.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Peaua Heimuli, Tonga’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

**eLearning for International Organisations**

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- Two learners from the Central Bank/Ministry of Finance took the Commonwealth Secretariat-Debt Record Management System (CSDRMS) eLearning course in 2010, and
- Three learners took the World Health Organization Writing Effectively course in 2011.
LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Tonga for 2012-2015 are:

- Developing core modules for online ICT teacher education for untrained graduate teachers in the outer islands and in the main district areas,
- Training teachers to develop supportive online materials at various higher education levels,
- Ongoing capacity building workshops to help teachers develop skills in using ICT in teaching and learning, and
- Creating a new physical infrastructure in the Tonga Institute of Higher Education that can provide ongoing technical support to train teachers to use ICT and deliver technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curriculum.
TUVALU

COL Focal Point:  Ms. Katalina P. Taloka, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports

BACKGROUND

A Polynesian island nation with a population of 10,400, Tuvalu is the fourth smallest country in the world. The literacy rate is high so Tuvalu’s educational focus is on developing vocational skills. Tuvalu is a regular contributor to COL’s budget.

SUMMARY

Tuvalu is involved in several COL activities, including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and skills development.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Tuvalu is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The 7th VUSSC training and materials development workshop on transport and logistics focusing on stevedoring was held in Apia, Samoa in November-December 2009. The workshop helped to build the capacity of workshop participants in ICT and content development as well as developing self-instructional materials for the transport and logistics-stevedoring course. Maxime M.V. James of the Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping attended the workshop.

The 8th VUSSC training and materials development workshop was held in Male, Maldives in March 2010, hosted by the Centre for Open Learning, Maldives. The participants developed a diploma programme on Sustainable Agriculture for Small States for learners. The programme is aimed at learners who want to start their own business and those who want to pursue a career in agriculture extension services. Sosea Tusialofa of the Institute of Technology, National University of Samoa attended the workshop.
Maseiga I. Osema of Tuvalu attended the 10th VUSSC training and materials development meeting in ‘Master in Education: Educational Leadership’ in Singapore from 17 November-2 December 2011.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

COL and the Open University Malaysia sponsored the Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) Management Committee Meeting and TQF General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 2010. Michael Noa of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the meeting.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. The participants presented their respective countries’ progress to-date, challenges and next steps. A Monitoring and Evaluation training was conducted during the two-day meeting. Katalina Taloka attended the meeting.

**Open Schooling**

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the Pacific. David Manuella of University of the South Pacific (USP) Campus, Tuvalu, conducted desk review and prepared a country report on “Second Chance Education in Tuvalu”.

The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Tuvalu.

**Higher Education**

USP Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. In 2010, COL supported 15 students with scholarships; two students from Tuvalu completed the programme.

**LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH**

**Skills Development**

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa in June-July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for ODL and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber. Lapana Ene and Fanioga Falasa of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a course planning workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials. This was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October 2010 and was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council. Lapana Ene, Vocational Supervisor, Education Department, Ministry of Education Youth and Sports attended the workshop.

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated the pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules and considered next steps and action plans. Maseiga Osema of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the workshop.
Integrating eLearning

COL, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Microsoft, organised the ICT in Education Leadership Forum in the Pacific from May 1-2, 2012 in Sydney, Australia. Some of the items discussed included: how explored how ICT has been integrated into teaching and learning in the Pacific; reviewed the issues, challenges and initiatives related to ICT competencies for teachers in the Pacific; teacher development approaches that make capacity building possible; and where and how policies and practices in education need to respond to harness the potential of ICT in teacher development. Emma Lauti and Valisi Tovia of the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports attended the Forum.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.

Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including Katalina Taloka of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and COL Focal Point.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. Katalina Taloka, Tuvalu’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. The areas identified by Tuvalu for 2012-2015 are:

- Development of core modules for ICT Teacher Education to be delivered at all levels of schooling,
- Capacity building and development of teachers to use ICT in the teaching and learning process,
- Development of modules in selected TVET learning programmes to be taught (delivered) through flexi mode (face-to-face and distance learning),
- Training teachers to develop support online materials at various levels,
- Empower and support the Education Department (Supervisory Unit) to provide pedagogical as well as technical support to teachers using ICT in delivery of curriculum, and
- Non-formal ODL capacity development for media and development (livelihoods and health) partners.
VANUATU

COL Focal Point: Mr. John Niroa, Ministry of Education

BACKGROUND

A chain of islands in the South Pacific with a population of about 240,000, Vanuatu is a small state of the Commonwealth. Vanuatu is a strong supporter of COL’s activities in the region.

Daniel Lamoureaux of the Ministry of Education was the Focal Point for COL from 2006-2010.

SUMMARY

Vanuatu is involved in several COL activities, including the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and skills development initiatives.

EDUCATION

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The main objectives of VUSSC are to:

- develop a collaborative network of Commonwealth small states,
- develop capacity in the use of information and communication technology (ICT),
- create and share learning materials at the post-secondary level, and
- establish a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF) that would enable the transfer of credits and qualifications.

Vanuatu is one of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth, actively participating in the VUSSC initiative.

The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting was held in November 2010 in Kochi, India. David Lambukly of the Vanuatu National Training Council attended the Meeting.

VUSSC has launched its own website (www.vussc.org), which includes online courses in subjects such as disaster management, entrepreneurship, life skills and tourism. Developed by educators from small states of the Commonwealth, the courses are freely available to anyone for adaptation and use.

Open Schooling

COL commissioned a desk report on Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance Education in the Pacific. This is a three-phase regional Pacific project (2010-2013) on the current reality of education in the
Pacific. Elvie Tamata (VITE) and Carol Aru, Emalus Campus, Vanuatu conducted desk review and prepared a country report on “Second Chance Education in Vanuatu”.

The desk report was submitted to the National Departments, Ministries of Education and Education Committees of the participating countries, including Vanuatu.

John Niroa of the Ministry of Education, Vanuatu and Joanne Bell of the University of the South Pacific (USP) Emalus Campus attended the Pacific Regional Open Schooling Forum in Tonga in November 2011.

Higher Education

USP Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the post-graduate programme in Legislative Drafting to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth. COL has granted USP an extension of the licence agreement for the use of the materials until February 2013. The agreement for the second cohort of students was signed in March 2011.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Skills Development

COL held a material development workshop for vocational literacy in Samoa from June-July 2010. The participants were trained in writing for open and distance learning (ODL) and contributed to the development of a Student Workbook and Tutor Guide to be used in conjunction with the Basic Trades for Small Island Nations courses in Working with Concrete and Working with Timber. David Lambukly of the Vanuatu National Training Council attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a course planning workshop to assist countries in planning the pilot delivery of the vocational literacy materials. This was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October 2010 and was hosted by Vanuatu National Training Council.

Following the implementation of the pilot in four countries, COL organised the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated the pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules and considered next steps and action plans. Berton Jones of Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association attended the workshop.

COL facilitated a distance education planning workshop for the Certificate in Community Development at the Community Education & Training Centre in Fiji/SPC in November 2011. Berton Jones of the Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association (VRDTCAs) attended the workshop. The programme started piloting in March 2012 and are in the process of developing the materials.

COL funded a Distance Flexible Learning (DFL) planning workshop in Port Vila in January 2012 to prepare for the DFL trial in Vanuatu. Representatives from VRDTCAs, the Community Education Training Centre (CETC) and several rural training centres attended the workshop.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6), jointly organised by IGNOU, India and the Commonwealth of Learning, was held in Kochi, India from 24-28 November 2010. The theme of the Forum was “Access and Success in Learning: Global Development Perspectives” with four sub-themes, namely: Social Justice, Community Development, Skills Development and Formal Education. COL organised 18 pre-conference meetings and workshops.
Over 600 delegates from more than 50 countries attended PCF6. COL sponsored over 250 delegates to the Forum including David Lambukly of Vanuatu National Training Council.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of ODL in their countries, receive the mid-term report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. John Niroa, Vanuatu’s Focal Point for COL, attended the meeting.

**LOOKING FORWARD**

COL develops Action Plans for each country, based on national priorities and its own mission and mandate. This is done through a consultative process. One such opportunity is the triennial Focal Points meeting at which the COL Focal Point is requested to consult with in-country partners and identify the key priorities that COL can support over a three-year period. Vanuatu’s top priority for the next triennium, 2012-2015, is to gain awareness of COL’s activities and increase access to capacity building opportunities provided by COL.
PARTNER COUNTRIES

Australia | Canada | New Zealand | United Kingdom
AUSTRALIA

COL Focal Point: Ms. Robyne Leven, Australia Agency for International Development

BACKGROUND

Australia rejoined COL as a major funding partner in 2011. Australia was a regular contributor and a major donor to COL until 2004. Since then, AusAID supported COL’s Pan-Commonwealth Forums on Open Learning (PCF) in London, UK (2008) and Kochi, India (2009) by providing funding support for participants from the Pacific.

The Australian government provides resources and financial support to projects around the globe through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Australia’s aid programme focuses on the Asia Pacific region, with selective assistance to Africa and the Caribbean – many of the same developing Commonwealth countries with whom COL works.

COL’s vision of “Access to Learning is the Key to Development” informs its work as it helps Member States accelerate progress towards achieving development goals. For example, COL harnesses the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to bring lifelong learning for farmers (L3F) in an effort to mitigate the challenge of poverty and food security (MDG 1). As more countries achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE), they seek to provide access to secondary education. Since existing institutions are unable to cater to this massive surge, COL initiated the Open Educational Resources for Open Schools project as a response (MDG 2). COL uses community media to promote mother and child health goals (MDGs 4 and 5) in countries such as India, Kenya and Malawi.

COL also focuses on four Education for All goals – access to primary education, gender equality, quality education, and learning and life skills for young people and adults – through teacher training, gender mainstreaming, quality assurance and skills development respectively.

Ms. Robyne Leven, Senior Policy Officer, UN & Commonwealth Section (primary Focal Point) and Dr. Chris Chung, Director, UN & Commonwealth Section of AusAID are Focal Points for COL. Mr. Peter O’Connor, Mr. Leslie O’ Donoghue and Ms. Claire Watt of the same agency were Focal Points for COL from 2009-2010, 2009-2011 and 2011-2012 respectively.

SUMMARY

Representatives from Australian institutions took part in several COL initiatives in open schooling, healthy communities and integrating eLearning.

Australia’s support to COL during 2009-2012 also includes sponsorship, planning and participation in PCF6 in 2010, as well as the expertise provided by consultants hired by COL for a number of projects.
AusAID MANDATE AND PRIORITIES

The objective of AusAID is to assist developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia’s national interest. The Millennium Development Goals underpin Australia’s aid programme. Australia is an active member of the Commonwealth and particularly values its role in advocating for the needs of small island states. Most of AusAID’s support to Commonwealth programmes goes to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Foundation.

COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS

AusAID focuses primarily on the Asia Pacific region, home to two-thirds of the world’s poor. COL and AusAID both work in all eight developing Commonwealth countries in the Pacific, as well as Commonwealth countries in Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Australia also provides assistance to Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean. Aid to Africa has increased significantly in recent years and now represents approximately five per cent of the AusAID programme.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schools Association (COMOSA). Jeane Schocroft of Open Access College, Australia was among 30 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

A COL workshop on copyright and open educational resources (OER) was held in Delhi in November 2009. Jeane Schocroft of Open Access College and open and distance learning practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

Open Access College is participating in the COMOSA research study on Online Learning Success Variations/Factors.

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010. About 30 representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and non-Commonwealth countries attended the roundtable, including Dr. Antony Stella of the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Seychelles in February 2012. Forty-one people from 23 COMOSA member countries attending the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Following the AGM, COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for open schools, which resulted in the drafting of a COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials also took place after the COMOSA AGM. Jeane Schocroft of Open Access College, Australia attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, the OER and Copyright Policy workshop and the “OER for Open Schools” launch.

Higher Education

The then COL President Sir John Daniel gave keynote addresses at the Australian Higher Education Conference in Sydney in March 2011 and the Box Hill Institute Leadership Forum Breakfast in April 2011. The Sydney speech was reported on the front page of The Australian newspaper, which resulted in AusAID
contacting Sir John Daniel for an interview and the necessary documents to feed into its Rapid Review of Commonwealth’s Contribution to Development Effectiveness.

The DEHub Innovation in Distance Education Project, a collaboration among five universities (four Australian institutions and Massey University, New Zealand) based at the University of New England, invited COL Vice President Professor Asha Kanwar to speak at its launch in February 2010. Subsequently, the University of New England sent a delegation to COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in India in November 2010, leading to the establishment of partnerships with the University of Delhi, Indira Gandhi National Open University and the National Institute of Open Schooling.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Healthy Communities

COL is collaborating with RMIT University, University of Western Sydney and national community broadcasting agencies in the development of community open and distance learning (ODL) capacity programming in the Pacific.

COL and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) conducted a workshop for community radio and education and development organisations on the sidelines of the AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference in Bangalore, India in February 2010. Participants shared, discussed and applied innovative approaches to developing educational content and programmes including the role of media in disaster management, climate change mitigation, food security and advocacy for gender equity. Shane Elson of AMARC Asia Pacific participated in the workshop and conference.

COL has engaged Jeremy Watkins of Swinburne University (now at the University of Western Sydney) to conduct research on the role of mobile telephones and other devices in community-based media and education. The final report was published in July 2011.

COL commissioned Professor Julie Fisher of Monash University with a group of four PhD students to develop a Facebook game application. They are conducting research on the potential of using this game for informal learning in the Pacific.

Integrating eLearning

A series of open educational resources (OER) capacity building workshops took place as part of the UNESCO-COL initiative, “Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity”. Dr. Antony Stella, Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)/APQN) was a keynote speaker at two workshops (April 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa and May 2010 in Windhoek, Namibia). The Policy Forum on “Taking the OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity” was held in Paris in December 2010. Allyn Radford of Learn'ilities' Pty Ltd attended the Forum.

Dr. Stella is also a member of the COL-UNESCO Expert Group for the UNESCO-COL Guidelines on OER in Higher Education. The Guidelines were launched on 1 November 2011 during UNESCO’s 36th General Conference in Paris.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world.

- One learner took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2009.
- Two learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2010.
- Three learners took the World Bank Effective Writing course in 2011.
- One learner took the UNHCR Writing Effective course in 2011.

EVENTS

Australia was a sponsor of PCF6 in Kochi, India in 2010. The funding supported attendance by Pacific participants. Thirteen Australians also attended or presented at PCF6, including a number of pre-conference workshops.

ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since 2009, COL has hired 16 Australian consultants to provide expertise and resources to projects in the region and across the Commonwealth. COL has also commissioned research from Australian academics and has benefited from the participation of Dr. Stella in the UNESCO-COL OER initiative.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL looks forward to increased support from Australia for activities in the Asia and Pacific regions in 2012-2015. Recognising that the two organisations share objectives and mandates relating to ODL and development, COL hopes to build a more substantial relationship with AusAID. The support COL seeks from Australia is both financial and intellectual. COL is confident that increased collaboration with individuals and institutions in Australia will strengthen open and distance learning efforts in Australia, the region and across the Commonwealth.
BACKGROUND

COL has been based in Vancouver, Canada since it was established in 1987 and the Canadian government offered to host it in British Columbia. Of 36 COL staff, 27 are Canadians or Permanent Residents of Canada. COL’s former President and CEO Sir John Daniel (2004-2012) was a former President of Laurentian University in Ontario, Canada. Sir John is a citizen of Canada and the UK.

Canada is a major contributor to COL’s budget and a strong supporter of COL’s activities. As a major donor, Canada has a seat on COL’s Board of Governors. Since 2010, that position has been filled by Ms. Janet Ecker, an accomplished business person and former Minister of Finance in Ontario. Mr. Gordon Scott of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is the CIDA Advisor to the Canadian Board Member. Ms. Barbara Scott, Ms. Mia Mouelhi and Ms. Sélène Grandchamp were previous CIDA Advisors to the Canadian Board.

Dr. Rory McGreal of Athabasca University, Canada is a UNESCO-COL Chair for Open Educational Resources (OER).

Canada is a host that is rich in resources for COL. Canadian institutions often co-operate with COL to host visitors from the developing world and share experiences and expertise.

Canada delivers support to countries and regions around the world through CIDA. COL is included in CIDA’s Multilateral Programmes Branch, United Nations and Commonwealth Program Division.

SUMMARY

COL’s vision of “Access to Learning is the Key to Development” informs its work as it helps member states accelerate progress towards achieving development goals. For example, COL harnesses the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to bring Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) in an effort to mitigate the challenge of poverty and food security (MDG 1). As more countries achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE), they seek to provide access to secondary education. Since existing institutions are unable to cater to this massive surge, COL initiated the “Open Educational Resources for Open Schools” project as a response (MDG 2). COL uses community media to promote mother and child health goals (MDGS 4 and 5) in countries such as India, Kenya and Malawi.

COL also focuses on four Education for All goals – access to primary education, gender equality, quality education, and learning and life skills for young people and adults – through teacher training, gender mainstreaming, quality assurance and skills development respectively.

COL’s work in 2009-2012 is aligned with CIDA’s goals in many of its countries of focus. COL’s work in both sectors, Education and Livelihoods & Health, supports CIDA’s priorities.
COL enjoys close relationships with several Canadian educational institutions. In this triennium, COL has embarked on a partnership with the University of British Columbia to develop and launch an innovative learning management system for use in developing Commonwealth countries.

**CIDA MANDATE AND PRIORITIES**

CIDA is Canada's lead agency for development assistance. CIDA’s aim is to:

- Manage Canada’s support and resources effectively and accountably to achieve meaningful, sustainable results, and
- Engage in policy development in Canada and internationally, enabling Canada's effort to realise its development objectives.

CIDA’s work is guided by three priority themes:

- Increasing food security,
- Securing the future of children and youth, and
- Stimulating sustainable economic growth.

COL supports CIDA’s work in improving access to quality education through its initiatives in open schooling, teacher education, Child-Friendly Schools and the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). CIDA’s focus on child survival, including maternal health, is supported by COL’s Healthy Communities activities in a number of Commonwealth countries. Canada’s efforts to address the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are reinforced by COL’s work in almost all of its programme areas.

**COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS**

The Government of Canada’s approach is to focus 80 per cent of bilateral resources in 20 countries of focus. These 20 countries were chosen based on their real needs, their capacity to benefit from aid, and their alignment with Canadian foreign policy priorities. The goal is to make Canada’s international assistance more focused, more effective and more accountable.

In Africa, CIDA is working to help the African Union achieve its vision of regional integration and socio-economic growth. CIDA’s work involves food security; specifically, increasing agricultural productivity. CIDA focuses on strengthening the enabling environment and coordinating mechanisms needed for regional integration. CIDA’s countries of focus in Africa include Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania – all countries where COL has a presence. COL is supporting the expansion of open schooling in Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania. In all three countries, COL is providing training in the use of community media to address community health issues. In partnership with the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa, COL is supporting the delivery of skills development through ODL in Ghana and Tanzania. COL’s Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration (CEMBA) and Master of Public Administration (CEMPA) programme is providing professional development for working professionals in Ghana. In Tanzania, COL is working with the Information Society and ICT Sector Development Project to develop a mobile learning programme for teachers and students in schools.

CIDA’s Asia programme concentrates on governance, private sector development and health. CIDA places a special emphasis on health and education in South Asia. Promoting gender equality is a cross-cutting theme for all sectors. CIDA’s countries of focus in Asia where COL is engaged in activities are Bangladesh and Pakistan. COL’s work with the Bangladesh Open University’s Open School includes helping it expand its reach to women and girls. Through its regional agency, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre
for Asia, COL is supporting the expansion of community radio in Bangladesh. In Pakistan, COL’s work includes providing planning support for open schooling.

CIDA’s Caribbean programme serves 14 countries, including the 12 Commonwealth nations where COL is also active. CIDA focuses on promoting sustainable economic growth in the region through initiatives such as increasing access to employment skills for youth, capacity building in small- and medium-sized businesses and strengthening the management of public financial resources. COL’s work in the Caribbean includes teacher education initiatives, expanding access to tertiary education through VUSSC, supporting the use of ODL for skills training, using ICT to build capacity in the agricultural sector through its Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme, training in ICT for education and the use of non-formal ODL to address health issues at the community level.

EDUCATION

Open Schooling

As part of COL’s initiative to establish and strengthen open schools, COL assisted in the establishment of the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA). The inaugural meeting of COMOSA was held in Delhi in November 2009. Cindy Gauthier of the Vancouver Learning Network, Canada was one of 30 partners who signed the COMOSA Constitution.

The COL workshop on Copyright and OER was held in Delhi in November 2009. Cindy Gauthier of the Vancouver Learning Network and ODL practitioners from more than 20 countries attended the workshop.

COL organised the COMOSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Seychelles in February 2012. 41 people from 23 COMOSA member countries attended the meeting. The eLearning Maturity Model (eMM) workshop for the COMOSA members was held on 29 February 2012. Following the AGM, COL organised an OER and Copyright Policy workshop for open schools, which resulted in the drafting of a COMOSA OER and Copyright Policy. The launch of the “OER for Open Schools” materials also took place after the COMOSA AGM. Cindy Gauthier of the Vancouver Learning Network and Monique Brewer of the Open School BC attended the COMOSA AGM, eMM workshop, the OER and Copyright Policy workshop and the “OER for Open Schools” launch.

Higher Education

COL’s Graduate Programme in Legislative Drafting was launched at Athabasca University in November 2009. The Programme is attracting students from around the globe who will graduate with the expertise to undertake diverse and challenging drafting responsibilities with proficiency and confidence.

LIVELIHOODS & HEALTH

Learning for Farming

In collaboration with the University of British Columbia, Canada, COL has developed a Learning Management System called LIVES (Learning through Interactive Voice Educational Systems). The goal is to provide communities with a learning tool based on voice mails using mobile phones. COL will be able to scale up its interventions because more than a thousand learners can be reached through this system, which can provide automated feedback and can be used to transmit voicemails in any language or dialect. LIVES is being tested with farmers in India and Jamaica.
Healthy Communities

In this triennium, COL partnered with Ottawa-based Farm Radio International to host scriptwriting contests for educators and media organisations in Africa. Focusing on smallholder farmer innovation and healthy communities, the initiative also provided free eLearning courses on radio scriptwriting. The winning scripts were distributed to several hundred radio organisations in Africa to encourage further use. COL Education Specialist, Community Media, Ian Pringle (a Canadian), sits on the Board of the Community Radio Fund of Canada.

Integrating eLearning

Dr. Roger Powley of Canada has developed an Instructional Design Template and conducted two workshops on Instructional Design in Guyana with the University of Guyana and Cyril Potter College of Education, Guyana and with eight TVET institutions in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

eLearning for International Organisations

COL customises eLearning solutions to meet the capacity enhancement needs of international organisations around the world. One learner took the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Effective Writing course in 2010.

EVENTS

Canada participated in COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in 2010 in a number of ways. Approximately 30 delegates from Canada took part in PCF6, in addition to COL staff. Individuals from Canada presented papers and participated in pre-Forum workshops organised by COL. COL regularly hosts meetings at its headquarters in Vancouver, Canada for team leaders for VUSSC as well as numerous staff members from developing world institutions for training programmes, meetings and consultations.

ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since 2009, COL has hired 129 Canadian consultants to provide expertise and resources to projects across the Commonwealth.

COL works with a range of Canadian partners including universities, organisations and private companies. COL’s partners in Canada include Athabasca University, BCcampus, the Canadian Council on Learning, CIDA, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, York University, private providers and individual consultants.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL looks forward to continuing its close and fruitful partnership with Canada in 2012-2015. Canada will continue to be a valued sponsor of COL’s activities while also continuing to provide valuable expertise through consultants, the Board of Governors and staff members.
NEW ZEALAND

COL Focal Point: Ms. Miriam Freeman-Plume, New Zealand Aid Programme

BACKGROUND

New Zealand is a major contributor to COL’s budget and is represented on COL’s Board of Governors by Dr. Linda Sissons CNZM, Chief Executive Officer of the Wellington Institute of Technology (WELTEC). New Zealand provides support and expertise to COL’s initiatives in the Pacific region, as well as contributing to pan-Commonwealth activities.

Dr. Caroline Seelig of The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (TOPNZ) and Jenny Williams are Honorary COL Advisors and Dr. Wayne Mackintosh of Otago Polytechnic is a COL Chair. Ms. Myra Harrison, the former Senior Education Sector Adviser, Development Strategy of New Zealand Aid Programme and Ms. Elena Procuta, Development Officer at Foreign Affairs and Trade were Focal Points for COL from 2007-2011 and 2011-2012 respectively.

SUMMARY

COL’s vision of “Access to Learning is the Key to Development” informs its work as it helps member states accelerate progress towards achieving development goals. For example, COL harnesses the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to bring lifelong learning for farmers (L3F) in an effort to mitigate the challenge of poverty and food security (MDG 1). As more countries achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE), they seek to provide access to secondary education. Since existing institutions are unable to cater to this massive surge, COL initiated the Open Educational Resources for Open Schools project as a response (MDG 2). COL uses community media to promote mother and child health goals (MDGs 4 and 5) in countries such as India, Kenya and Malawi.

COL also focuses on four Education for All goals – access to primary education, gender equality, quality education, and learning and life skills for young people and adults – through teacher training, gender mainstreaming, quality assurance and skills development respectively.

In 2009-2012, COL’s work is aligned with the goals of the New Zealand Aid Programme in its area of focus, the Pacific. New Zealand’s aid priorities are reflected in COL’s two programme sectors, Education and Livelihoods & Health.

New Zealand continues to be a valued partner for COL in the Pacific region. New Zealand has hosted several regional meetings, and New Zealand consultants are contributing expertise to COL projects in the region.
NEW ZEALAND AID PROGRAMME MANDATE AND PRIORITIES

The New Zealand Aid Programme is the New Zealand government’s international aid and development agency. Its mandate is to “support sustainable development in developing countries in order to reduce poverty and to contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world”.

New Zealand’s aid efforts concentrate on activities that contribute to poverty reduction through sustainable economic development; create safe, secure and inclusive societies; fulfil basic needs; and focus on sustainability.

New Zealand’s development assistance aims to help countries achieve and maintain the internationally agreed poverty reduction objectives set out in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). COL shares this focus and contributes to the achievement of the MDGs in most of its programme areas.

Nga Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti – the paddles that bring growth from afar – is the Maori name for the New Zealand Aid Programme. It is an approach shared by COL in its focus on learning for development.

The New Aid Programme priorities include:

- The emphasis on outcome-based approach in schooling, instead of inputs, measuring
  i) attendance at schools especially for those with disabilities,
  ii) retention rates,
  iii) success rates,
  iv) professional development of teachers and the impact of training, and
  v) gender equality.
- In the post-school sector, the focus will be on assisting Pacific nations with economic development by increasing the numbers of scholarships offered. Training in practical, vocational and applied skills will be a priority.
- Collaboration will become increasingly important. There would be more collaboration with private and microfinance entities in agriculture for coffee, tapioca and vanilla plantations. Institutions such as TOPNZ, WELTEC, Manukau Institute of Technology and Unitec Institute of Technology would work together to provide resources in the Pacific.

COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS

The Pacific is the New Zealand Aid Programme’s core geographic focus. More than half of New Zealand’s total aid goes to this region. The New Zealand Aid Programme also supports development in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Global development efforts are supported through funding from the New Zealand Aid Programme to international agencies.

New Zealand provides assistance to all Pacific Commonwealth countries, as does COL. Its largest bilateral programmes in the Pacific are in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu – countries where COL is also active. Increasingly, funding is allocated towards activities focused on economic growth. New Zealand’s aid also focuses on outcomes central to development in the Pacific including fostering sustainable economic growth and improved livelihoods, investing in people through health and education, strengthening governance, helping communities be better prepared for natural disasters and creating healthy communities.

COL has contributed to development efforts in all Pacific Commonwealth nations in this triennium through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), as well as initiatives in the areas of healthy communities, teacher education, open schooling and learning for farming.
EVENTS

New Zealand was an active participant in the Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Form on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in November 2010. Several delegates from New Zealand attended PCF6. The Honourable Steven Maharey of Massey University was a keynote speaker at the Forum. He delivered the paper on Access and Success: Distance Learning at Massey University and its Impact on New Zealand Society”. Dr. Caroline Seelig of TOPNZ was the keynote speaker on Skills Development.

The COL Regional Focal Points Meeting (Pacific) was held in Auckland, New Zealand from 1-3 November 2011. This meeting was jointly organised by COL, the Wellington Institute of Technology and TOPNZ. The meeting is held once every three years and provides an opportunity for the Focal Points to share information about the status of open and distance learning (ODL) in their countries, receive the midterm report of what COL has done in each country and identify education and training priorities that COL can support in the next Three-Year Plan, 2012-2015. COL Focal Points from seven Pacific nations attended the meeting.

COL GOVERNANCE

As a major contributor to COL’s budget, New Zealand has a seat on the Board of Governors. It is currently held by Dr. Linda Sissons CNZM, Chief Executive Officer of the Wellington Institute of Technology. Dr. Sissons is also a member of the Board’s Executive and Performance committees.

ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since 2009, COL has hired 12 consultants from New Zealand to provide expertise and resources to projects in the Pacific region and across the Commonwealth.

New Zealand is playing an important leadership role with open educational resources (OER) through the OER Foundation, headquartered at Otago Polytechnic in Dunedin, New Zealand. This non-profit organisation is working to help education institutions harness the potential of OER – learning materials that educators can freely modify, adapt and reuse. The founding Director of the OER Foundation, Dr. Wayne Mackintosh, is a former COL Education Specialist. Dr. Mackintosh launched the Learning4Content global wiki skills initiative during his time at COL. COL continued to support the WikiEducator, now located at the OER Foundation, Otago Polytechnic during 2009-2012.

COL signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TOPNZ in July 2010 to identify possible avenues for collaboration and to establish the basis of collaboration where it is mutually beneficial. Both organisations agree to jointly explore and coordinate activities of mutual interest that will promote the development and application of conventional as well as non-conventional methods of learning and training, particularly through the use of open, distance, flexible and technology-mediated learning leading. Under the MOU, COL is supporting learners in Africa to do a certificate course in elearning. 23 learners were nominated and 13 registered for the course.

An international roundtable to showcase COL’s Quality Assurance toolkits was held in Colombo in August 2010, facilitated by Caroline Donovan of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. About 30 representatives from Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Australia and other non-Commonwealth countries, attended the roundtable.

COL commissioned TOPNZ to conduct a study on the digital literacy of health workers in the Pacific. The report was submitted in July 2011.
In partnership with COL, TOPNZ facilitated the Pacific Regional Vocational Literacy and Numeracy Course Evaluation Workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in June 2011. The participants evaluated pilot delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy for Basic Trades course, collaborated to review and revise the literacy and numeracy modules and considered next steps and action plans.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2012-2015, COL anticipates further strengthening its partnership with New Zealand and collaborating to achieve key education and development goals in the Pacific region. New Zealand’s support for COL through sponsorship and expertise is integral to COL’s success in the region. COL will continue to explore opportunities to support the New Zealand Aid Programme’s key priority areas.
BACKGROUND

The United Kingdom (UK) is a major contributor to COL’s budget and an important source of leadership and expertise. As a major donor, the UK has a seat on COL’s Board of Governors, which is currently held by Ms. Jo Bourne, Education Policy Team Leader, Education, with the Department for International Development (DFID).

COL has close relationships with several institutions in the UK, particularly the UK Open University. COL’s former President Sir John Daniel (2004-2012) was a former Vice Chancellor of the Open University and a citizen of the UK and Canada.

The UK delivers international aid through DFID. As a programme, COL falls under DFID’s United Nations and Commonwealth Department and under its Education programme.

British citizen, Alison Mead Richardson is COL’s Education Specialist - Skills Development.

Mr. Rod Tyrer is an Honorary COL Advisor and Mr. Desmond Bermingham, Visiting Fellow at the Center for Global Development, was an Honorary COL Advisor from 2009-2012.

SUMMARY

COL’s vision of “Access to Learning is the Key to Development” informs its work as it helps member states accelerate progress towards achieving development goals. For example, COL harnesses the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to bring lifelong learning for farmers (L3F) in an effort to mitigate the challenge of poverty and food security (MDG 1). As more countries achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE), they seek to provide access to secondary education. Since existing institutions are unable to cater to this massive surge, COL initiated the Open Educational Resources for Open Schools project as a response (MDG 2). COL uses community media to promote mother and child health goals (MDGS 4 and 5) in countries such as India, Kenya and Malawi.

COL also focuses on four Education for All goals – access to primary education, gender equality, quality education, and learning and life skills for young people and adults – through teacher training, gender mainstreaming, quality assurance and skills development respectively.

In 2009-2012, COL’s activities have supported DFID’s work in developing Commonwealth nations in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. COL’s work in both sectors, Education and Livelihoods & Health, contributes to DFID’s goals of poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The UK has supported COL’s work in several ways during this triennium. The University of London, the UK Open University, and the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat were sponsors of COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in Kochi, India in 2010. Those partners and other
UK institutions have been involved in several COL projects, and COL’s work has benefited from the involvement of a number of UK consultants.

**DFID’S MANDATE AND PRIORITIES**

Most UK aid from DFID goes to developing countries either directly or through an international body, whichever is judged to achieve the best results. More than 40 per cent of UK aid is channeled through international bodies who address all aspects of development. Activities include work on healthcare, peacekeeping, education and economic growth. The main recipients are the European Commission, the World Bank, the United Nations and the Global Fund.

**COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS**

DFID works in more than 150 countries worldwide. Africa is a major focus of UK aid. DFID supports activities in most of the countries where COL is active, including 14 African Commonwealth nations. DFID’s regional programme in Africa concentrates on meeting challenges related to health, food security and gender. These priorities are mirrored in COL’s work in Africa, particularly healthy communities initiatives, open schooling, teacher training, learning for farming and skills development.

DFID’s work in Asia emphasises inter-regional trade, natural resource management, health and hunger. Changing the lives of girls and women is a particular priority for DFID in Asia. COL’s work in Asia related to learning for farming, healthy communities (community learning programmes), open schooling, teacher education and skills development supports these priorities. COL works in some priority countries for DFID namely, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

In the Caribbean, DFID’s work focuses on economic growth, reducing crime and climate change. Focus countries are Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica — countries where COL is also active. COL’s healthy communities learning programmes, the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth and skills development initiatives lend indirect support to DFID’s work in the region.

**EVENTS**

The United Kingdom participated in COL’s Sixth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF6) in 2010 in a number of ways. Approximately 27 delegates from the UK took part in PCF6. They acted as presenters and participated in pre-Forum workshops organised by COL. The UK Open University was a sponsor and provided funding to help delegates from developing countries attend and participate.

COL sponsored educators from five developing countries to the Cambridge International Conference on Open, Distance and eLearning in 2009 and again in 2011.

COL supported the participation of students at three South African schools in BBC School Report News Day in March 2009. Students received training in interviewing and radio production techniques and then created their own radio reports that were among thousands of reports from more than 500 schools worldwide that were broadcast on the BBC for School Report News Day. COL also supported the participation of students from three schools in Zambia in BBC School Report News Day 2010.
COL GOVERNANCE

As a major donor to COL’s budget, the United Kingdom has a seat on COL’s Board of Governors. Jo Bourne, Education Policy Team Leader with DFID, has held that position since 2010. Mr. Roger Clarke is the DFID Advisor to the UK Board Member.

Mr. Martin Bean, Vice Chancellor of the UK Open University, is the Commonwealth Secretary-General’s appointment to COL’s Board of Governors.

ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since 2009, COL has hired 25 consultants from the United Kingdom to provide expertise and resources to projects across the Commonwealth.

COL works with a range of partners in the UK including universities, organisations and private companies. The Commonwealth Secretariat, an important COL partner, is based in London.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL looks forward to continuing its close and fruitful partnership with the United Kingdom in 2012-2015. Partners in the UK will continue to be valued sponsors of COL’s activities; individuals in the UK will continue to provide valuable expertise as consultants, advisors and members of COL’s Board of Governors.
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:
Access to learning is the key to development

Mission:
To help governments and institutions expand the scope, scale and quality of learning by using new approaches and technologies, especially those subsumed under the general term of open and distance learning (ODL).