



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COUNTRY REPORT
2021-2023 | **CARIBBEAN**
& AMERICAS



St Vincent and
The Grenadines

Helping Commonwealth Member States and institutions use distance learning and technologies for expanding access to education and training.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is focused on adding value to member countries' efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG4. It's supporting governments and institutions in the Caribbean in the use of appropriate, affordable technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development.

During its current plan (2021-2027), COL will:

- i) build on its expertise in ODL, OER and TEL to play a more influential role in national policy development and implementation;
- ii) invest in innovations and research;
- iii) support the digital transformation of institutions and organisations;
- iv) promote gender equality; and
- v) implement a rigorous monitoring and evaluation plan.

COL's work is organised into two sectors — Education and Skills — with Gender Equality and Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) as cross-cutting initiatives.

The Education sector supports formal education from secondary to tertiary levels across the Commonwealth, particularly in the small states (Caribbean: Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago) and has four initiatives: Open Schooling; Teacher Education; Higher Education and the Virtual University for Small States of The Commonwealth (VUSSC).

The Skills sector supports formal, non-formal and informal education and training to equip learners for livelihoods and has three initiatives: Skills for Work (SfW); Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) and GIRLS Inspire.

The work in these sectors complements the three pathways of change COL is focusing on in achieving impact for each Caribbean member state. These are:

1. Building National Resilience
2. Strengthening Institutions
3. Improving Lives and Livelihoods.

INTRODUCTION

A group of many islands and cays in the Caribbean, St Vincent and the Grenadines is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of over 100,000 ([World Bank](#), 2022).

COL's work in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is primarily in the areas of higher education through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) network, technology-enabled learning and skills for work. Learners from St. Vincent and the Grenadines are also participating in COL's free, open online courses and benefitting from other available resources.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in St. Vincent and the Grenadines include:

- Ministry of Education, National Reconciliation, Ecclesiastical Affairs and Information
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC)

KEY CONTACTS

FOCAL POINT

Mrs Kay Martin-Jack
Chief Education Officer
Ministry of Education &
National Reconciliation

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime Minister, the Honourable Dr Ralph Gonsalves, described COL as “an institution of solidarity”.
- 2,508 learners from St. Vincent and the Grenadines have enrolled with 972 certificates being issued through the Skills Online Programme.

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

COL is working with governments to use gender-responsive ODL policies and strategies for increasing equitable access to quality learning.

COL supported the attendance of members from all 12 commonwealth Caribbean countries to a meeting with Caribbean Association of National Training Authorities (CANTA) to review, validate and approve the Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines for the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) (2023), as well as engage the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) with the aim of approving the reviewed Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines for the CVQ. Participants came from ministries, TVET councils, and National Training Agencies. [May 2023]

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

COL is supporting partner institutions to strengthen its ODL systems and capacities for providing quality education and training.

20 Ministry staff successfully completed “Developing and Designing Online Assessments” online course offered in July 2021. 16 completed the course offered in November 2021.

42 (7m, 35f) academics from St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College participated in the workshop, “Developing and Teaching Online Courses”, held in February 2023.

39 (6m, 33f) academics from St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College enrolled in the course, “Developing and Designing Online Assessments”, which began in April 2023.

26 academics from St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College developed online courses following the Developing and Teaching Online Courses training between February 28 and April 28, 2023.

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

COL continues to provide learners, especially from disadvantaged groups, access to learning and resources for improved livelihoods.

COL’s partnership with Coursera, Udemy and Grow with Google continues to offer nominated learners this vast range of courses - a pathway for lifelong learning and growth and enhancing skills for employment and entrepreneurship. Since July 2021, 2,508 learners from St. Vincent and the Grenadines have enrolled with 972 certificates being issued.

COL has partnered with St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College (SVGCC) to expand access for Vincentian students to online and blended learning. Four capacity-building activities will take place in 2023 with 25 lecturers to be trained to design, develop and facilitate online courses in the areas of Caribbean Studies, Communication, Human Relations, Information technology, Maths, Psychology, and Spanish. In addition, COL will assist SVGCC to develop a policy for online teaching and learning, as well as building a learning support system for online learners.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The **Regional Focal Points Meeting for the Caribbean** was held in Kingston, Jamaica from 30-31 January 2023. **COL’s Focal Point Mrs Anne-Marie Kay Martin-Jack from the Ministry of Education and National Reconciliation participated.** The meeting set out to update everyone on COL’s work in the region and wider Commonwealth, to consult on regional and national priorities and to discuss the role of education in promoting a green learning agenda. Many of the regional and national priorities identified by the Focal Points reflect those in COL’s Strategic Plan 2021-2027 but common areas of concern included food security and training related to climate-smart agriculture; male underperformance and the need for pedagogies tailored to meet their needs; access to OER aligned

with the national curriculum; the need to strengthen special needs and inclusive education; increase demand for TVET; and capacity building and technical support for institutions in ODL and digital pedagogies.

The project launch of COL and SVGCC's collaboration was held in February 2023. **Prime Minister, the Honourable Dr Ralph Gonsalves, described COL as “an institution of solidarity”** and underscored the importance of e-learning for St Vincent and the Grenadines, especially in light of his government's plan to have at least one graduate per household by 2030. Mr Nigel Scott, Director for SVGCC also spoke.

PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

Report on the Regional Focal Points Meeting – Caribbean (2023) <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5288>



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