

The Virtual University for  
Small States of the Commonwealth







Foreign Minister Kenneth Tsekoa  
with  
former Commonwealth Secretary-General Don McKinnon





The Prime Minister and First Lady visit COL and meet children from Deep Cove School, BC, who had collected money for a school in Lesotho

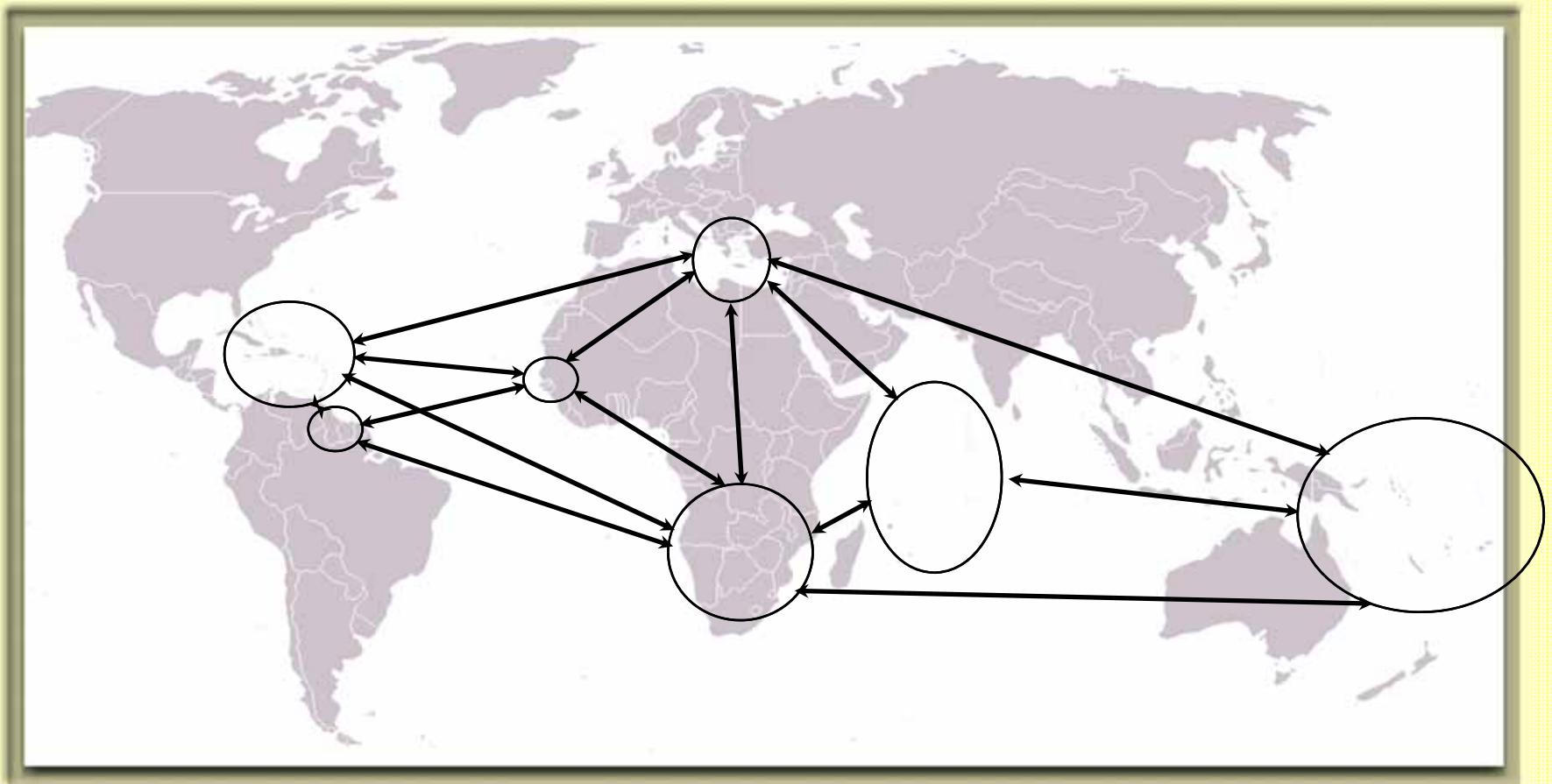


# The Commonwealth









**The Commonwealth Small States**  
spread across the globe



# Features of Small States

- Fragile economies
- High transport costs
- Prone to natural disasters





# Expanding Tertiary Education in Small States a special challenge



# An example of the challenge...



“tertiary education in Seychelles is a major drain on its economy as many Seychellois are sent abroad, at considerable expense, for higher education and training since Seychelles does not have a university”

*Ministry of Education, 2006*





University of Seychelles – Created 2010



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Not a new university but a  
collaborative network for  
strengthening capacity and  
developing eLearning  
materials



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# Why?



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## **14CCEM – Halifax, Canada 2000**

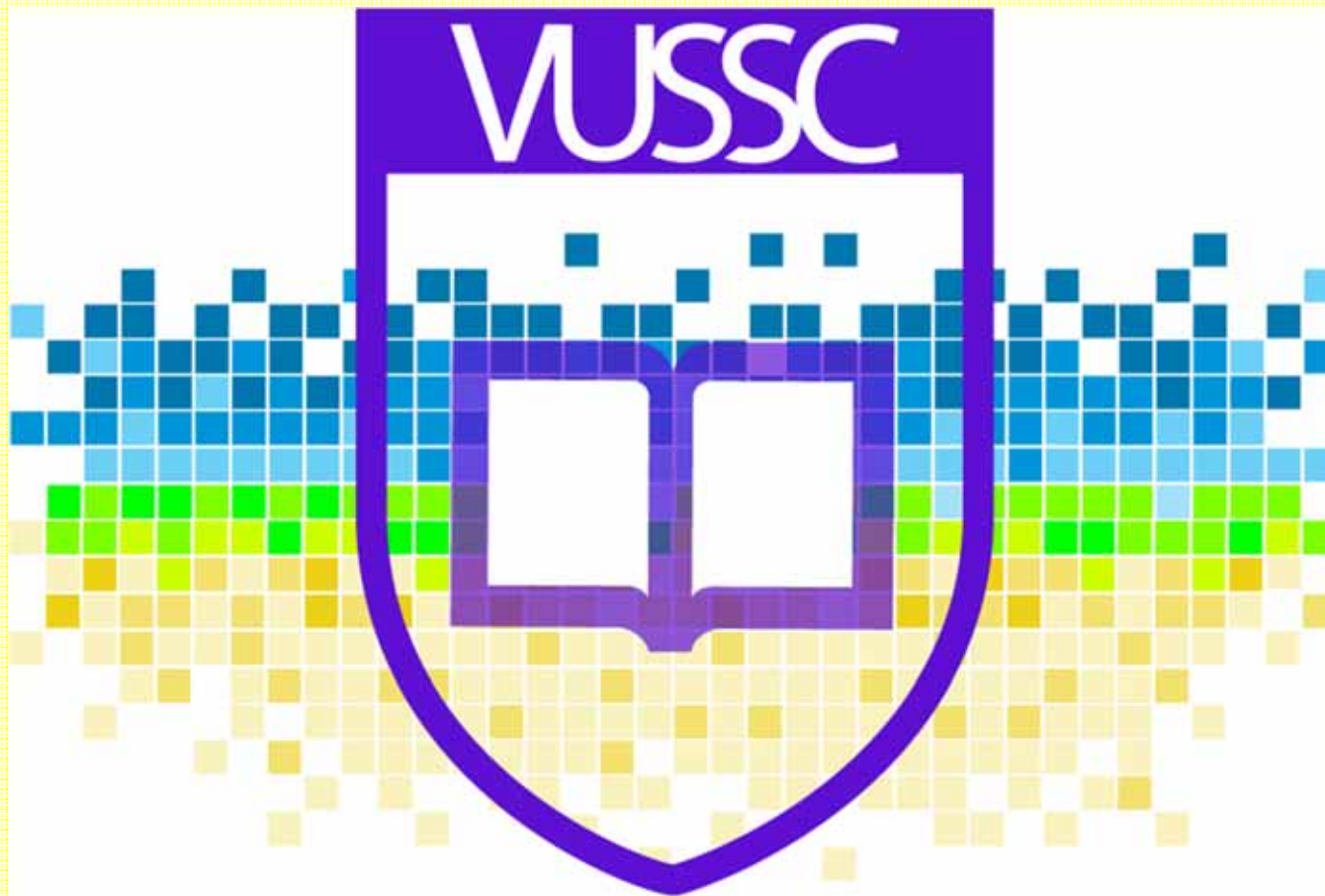
- High profile development agenda:
  - Millennium Development Goals
  - Education for All
- The Dotcom frenzy



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# What?



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- Expand tertiary education



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- Expand tertiary education

- Engage with online world



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# When?



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# Course development workshops (“Boot camps”)

Tourism & Entrepreneurship



Professional Development of Educators



Life Skills



Disaster Management



Fisheries



Construction & Building



Port Management and Stevedoring



Agriculture



Business and Entrepreneurship



# Mauritius VUSSC Boot Camp – August 2006



**Business and Eco-tourism**



# *Course development workshops (“Boot camps”)*

**Tourism & Entrepreneurship**



**Professional Development of Educators**



**Life Skills**



**Disaster Management**



**Fisheries**



**Construction & Building**



**Port Management and Stevedoring**



**Agriculture**



**Business and Entrepreneurship**



# Seychelles VUSSC Boot Camp – March 2008



**Fisheries**



# Maldives VUSSC Boot Camp – March 2010



**Agriculture**









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# A Transnational Qualifications Framework

(developed with the help of the South African Qualifications Authority)



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VUSSC's first fully online course  
**MANAGING AND FACILITATING  
ONLINE INSTRUCTION**  
University of the West Indies  
Open Campus  
COL sponsored students from  
VUSSC countries.



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[www.vussc.info/](http://www.vussc.info/)



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Where do  
the \$\$\$  
come from?



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Plan: \$20 million (5 years)

Fact: \$ 2 million (5 years)

“SHOE STRING”

“BOTTOM UP”



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Thank you to...

- The Hewlett Foundation
- The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
- The Government of Singapore
- Participating governments



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Paul West



John Lesperance



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Emma Kruse Vaai (Samoa)  
Chair, VUSSC Management Committee





# Course development workshops (“Boot camps”)

Tourism & Entrepreneurship



Professional Development of Educators



Life Skills



Disaster Management



Fisheries



Construction & Building



Port Management and Stevedoring



Agriculture



Business and Entrepreneurship





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All VUSSC course materials are  
made available for worldwide  
adaptation and use as

OPEN  
EDUCATIONAL  
RESOURCES



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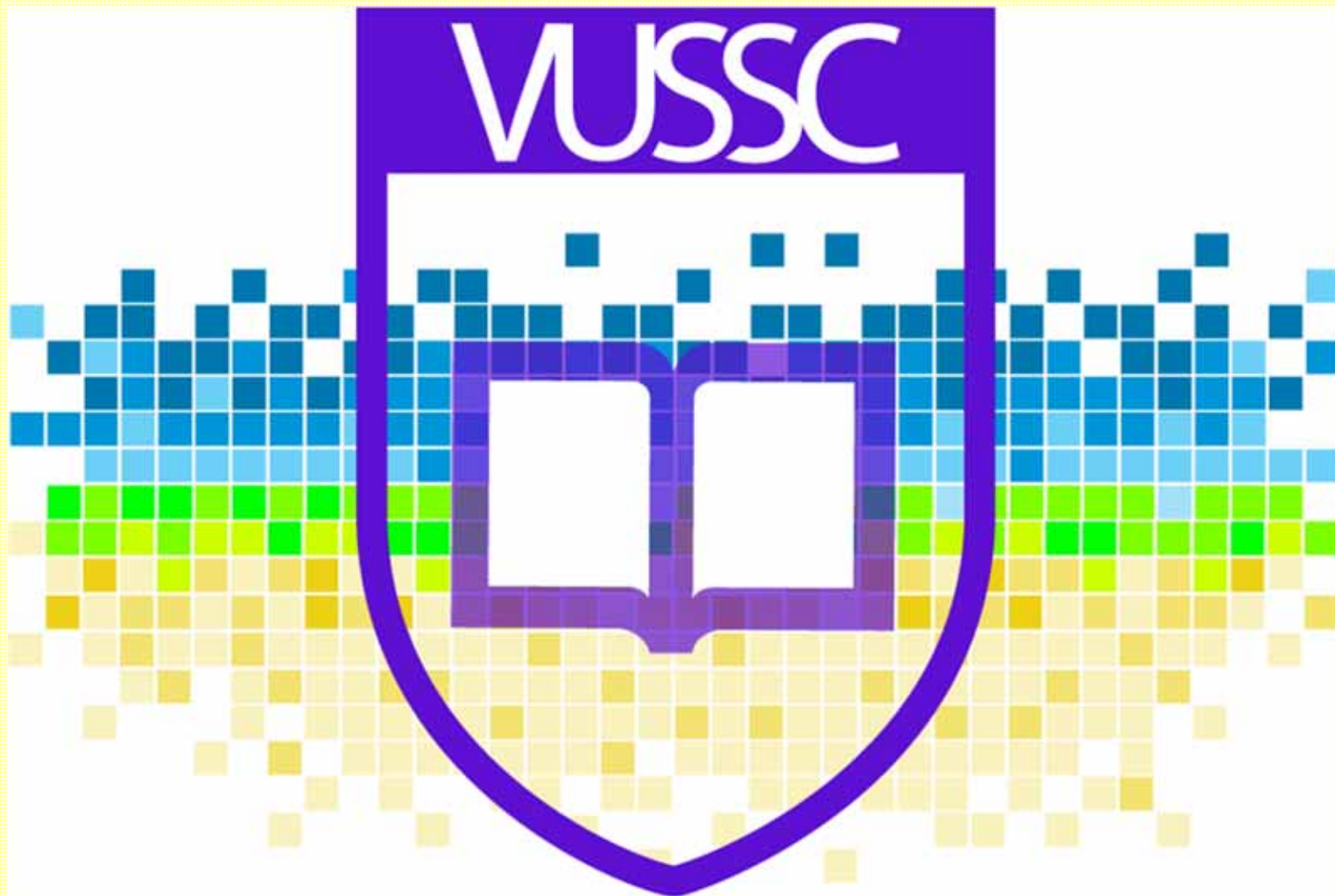
The Open University

# OpenLearn

Making educational resources freely available

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## The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

Supporting the Small States is one aspect of the  
Joint Work Plan of:



and



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The VUSSC is not a  
COL project but an  
initiative of the small  
states themselves



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THANK YOU

For text and slides:  
[www.col.org/speeches](http://www.col.org/speeches)

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