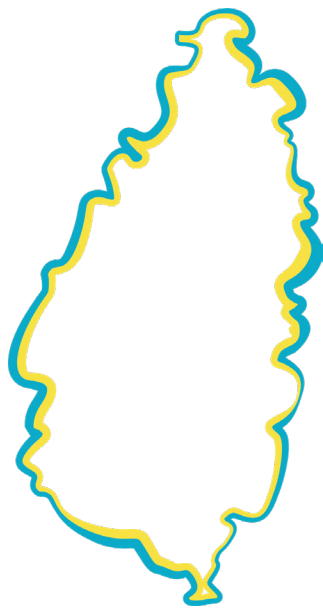




## FOCUS ON SAINT LUCIA



# 2021–24



COL's work in Saint Lucia is primarily in the areas of higher education through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth network and skills for work. Learners from Saint Lucia are also participating in COL's free online courses and benefitting from other openly available resources.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- National Skills Development Centre developed an open and distance learning (ODL) strategy and action plan.
- Over 1,000 learners from Saint Lucia have enrolled in 5,242 courses with 1,805 certificates issued through the Skills Online project.

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. We support the governments and institutions in the use of appropriate, affordable technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development. During its current plan (2021–27), 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 currently 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 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; 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 member country. These are:

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

## KEY CONTACTS

### FOCAL POINT

Mr Omar Jordan  
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Curriculum and Material Development Unit (CAMDU)  
Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development,  
Innovation, Science, Technology, and Technical and  
Vocational Training

## PARTNERS

COL's partners in Saint Lucia include:

- Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training
- National Skills Development Centre
- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
- Sir Arthur Lewis Community College

## BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

COL initiated several high-level panels on Climate Change and Education to support Member countries in advancing climate action (through policy, capacity, resources and research). This resulted in the *Transforming Education for Climate Action: Report to Commonwealth Ministers of Education*, published in August 2022.

COL's partnership with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States has led to improved capacity among 49 educators to evaluate, select and use assistive

technologies as instructional support for students with special needs. To mark the successful completion of the training, a graduation ceremony for these educators was held in June 2023 where participants from six Caribbean nations and territories (British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St Vincent and The Grenadines), gathered with leaders and senior members of their Ministries for this virtual ceremony.

## STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

In August 2022, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College developed a strategic plan to integrate technology-enabled Learning into its technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

During 2021–22, COL, in partnership with UNESCO-UNEVOC, supported the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) to build the capacity of practitioners to develop strategies for inclusive TVET delivery using open and distance learning (ODL)

approaches and technologies. The National Skills Development Centre participated in the project and developed its institutional ODL strategy and action plan.

Following its partnership with COL, the Organisation for Eastern Caribbean States began managing its own open-source learning management system in July 2023 and is now offering teacher professional development courses independently.

## IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

COL has been offering skill development programmes online in partnership with Coursera, Udemy and Grow with Google enabling lifelong learning and skills for employment and entrepreneurship. Since July 2021, 1,075 learners from Saint Lucia have completed 1,805 courses through COL's Skills Online project.

## SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

COL's Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning is held triennially and is co-hosted with different partners in different regions of the Commonwealth. Three delegates from Saint Lucia attended the Tenth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF10), the first-ever hybrid Forum held in Calgary, Canada from 14–16 September 2022. They included: Germain Anthony, OECS Commission; Pauline Antoine-Prospere, Ministry of Education and Royston Emmanuel, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

COL's Regional Focal Points Meeting for the Caribbean was held in Kingston, Jamaica from 30–31 January 2023. COL's Focal Point, Ms Karen Lorraine Renee from the Ministry of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology, Technical and Vocational Training, participated in this meeting. Common areas of concern in the region identified by the participants include 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 Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE), in partnership with the University of Trinidad and Tobago, held its 19<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in October 2023, attended by approximately 200 quality assurance professionals in the region from academia, training agencies,

and government ministries. COL's Vice President delivered a plenary on the impact of recent AI developments, and senior academics from COL's VUSSC partner universities presented on post-pandemic QA recovery. The Honourable Nigel de Freitas, Acting President of Trinidad and Tobago and Senate President, stressed the urgency of workforce development for regional economic growth, highlighting the role of innovation.

COL and CANTA have been collaborating to enhance TVET across the Caribbean. Beginning in late 2022, COL hosted a workshop in Barbados to equip leaders with skills for integrating ODL into institutional strategies. This activity led to the revision of guidelines for awarding the Caribbean Vocational Qualification, discussed in subsequent workshops held in Barbados and Grenada. In a meeting in November 2023 in Grenada, COL and CANTA developed two new occupational standards for the blue economy sector and deliberated on scaling courseware materials across the region. Regional organisations such as the CARICOM as well as the International Labour Organisation joined in some of the meetings. These collaborative efforts aim to transform the education system, diversify qualifications, and upskill the workforce from primary to tertiary levels, aligning with global trends and technological advancements. Besides providing technical advice, COL also supported the participation of experts from the 12 Caribbean Commonwealth countries.

## PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

**Gender Profile 2023: Saint Lucia** <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5557>

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

**Transforming Education for Climate Action: Report to Commonwealth Ministers of Education**  
<http://hdl.handle.net/11599/4068>



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