

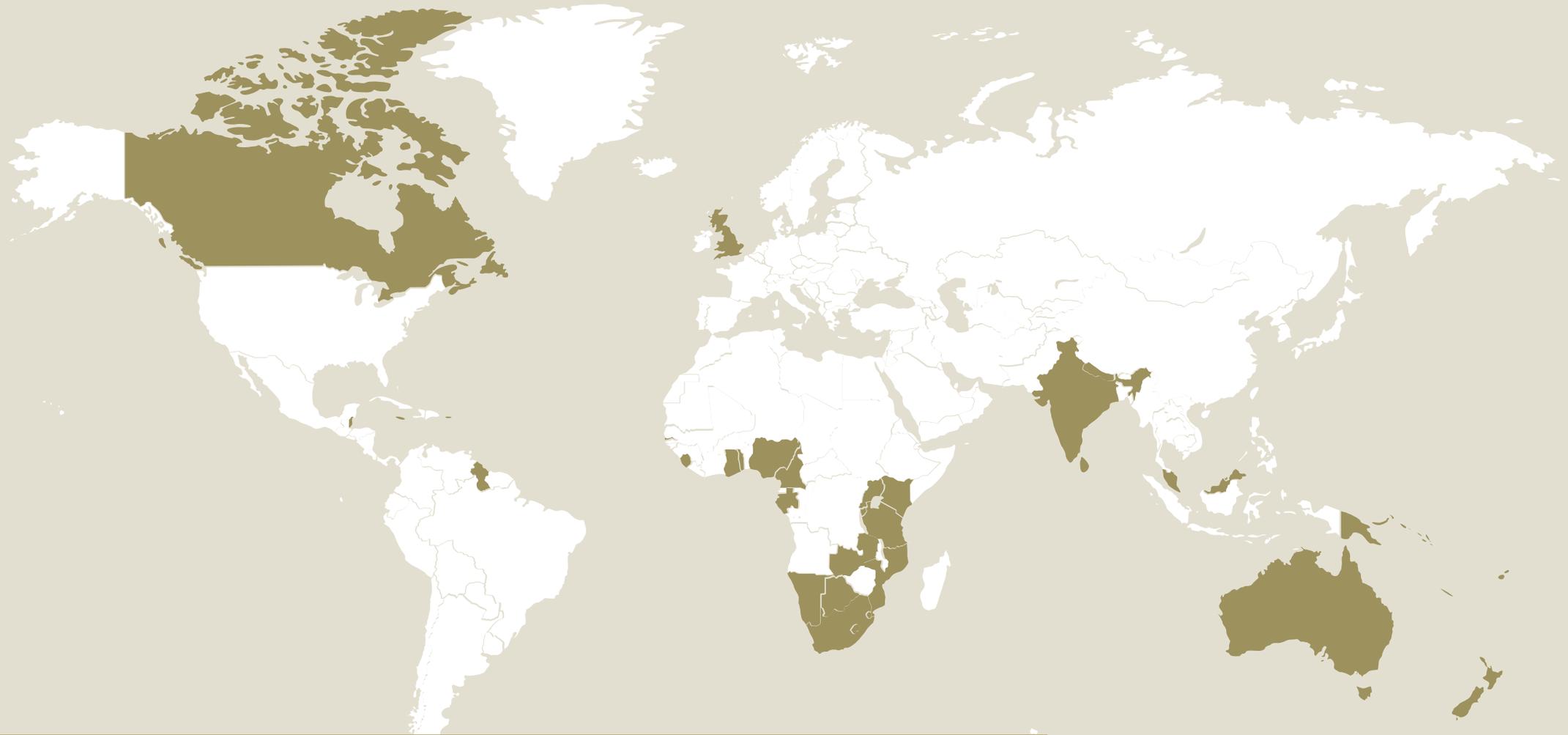
Role of ODL in providing lifelong learning opportunities for skills



Professor Asha Kanwar
President & CEO, Commonwealth of Learning

Sri Lanka | 30 December 2022

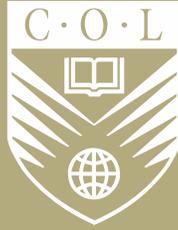




The Commonwealth

56 developed and developing nations around the world





COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING



To help Commonwealth governments and institutions
use technologies to improve and expand access to
education and training

Partners

- Ministry of Education
- Open University of Sri Lanka
- University Grants Commission
- National Institute of Education
- Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
- National Library of Sri Lanka



Key Activities

- CEMBA/MPA
- C-DELTA
- Teacher Education
- L3F
- Gender Mainstreaming
- GIRLS Inspire





THE **OPEN UNIVERSITY** OF SRI LANKA



Honorable Chancellor,
Distinguished members of the OUSL,
Graduands,
Parents and Friends,

It is a special privilege to receive a DLitt (honoris causa) from the Open University of Sri Lanka, a pioneer in distance learning in Asia and I thank the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ariadural, and the university community for this great honour.

A Convocation is a very important milestone in the life of an institution and I am really pleased to be a part of this happy occasion. OUSL was established nearly four decades ago and during this time the university has provided opportunities to thousands of men and women who are very diverse in terms of age, income and social background, to gain qualifications ranging from certificates to diplomas, degrees and doctorates. If the student cannot reach the institution, the institution is reaching the student in remote rural locations through flexible need-based programmes.

Even though access to quality higher education is still a distant dream for many young people globally, the demand for tertiary qualifications continues to grow. Sri Lanka has a large system of higher education institutions: 15 public universities, 14 public higher education institutes and more than 40 private institutions. Yet the Age Participation Rates of the 18-24 year-olds in higher education is about 17%, significantly lower than the OECD average of 40-50%, which is required for sustainable economic development in any country. Sri Lanka is exploring various ways of increasing access to quality higher education to its citizens.

OUSL CONVOCATION ADDRESS 2015

28th General Convocation 2015
The Open University of Sri Lanka
By

Professor, Asha Singh Kanwar
President & Chief Executive Officer
of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL)
17th May 2016

Plan

Context

Understanding Lifelong Learning

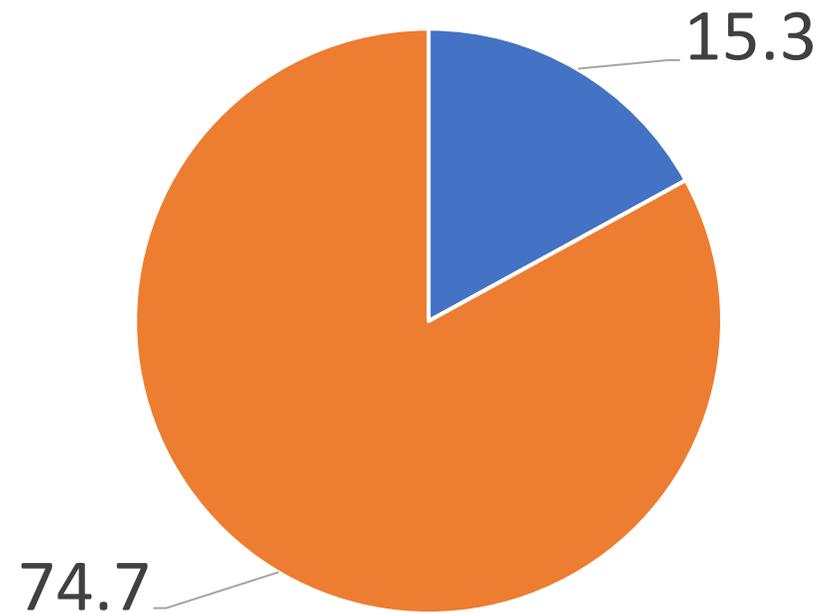
Role of ODL

Need for Transformation

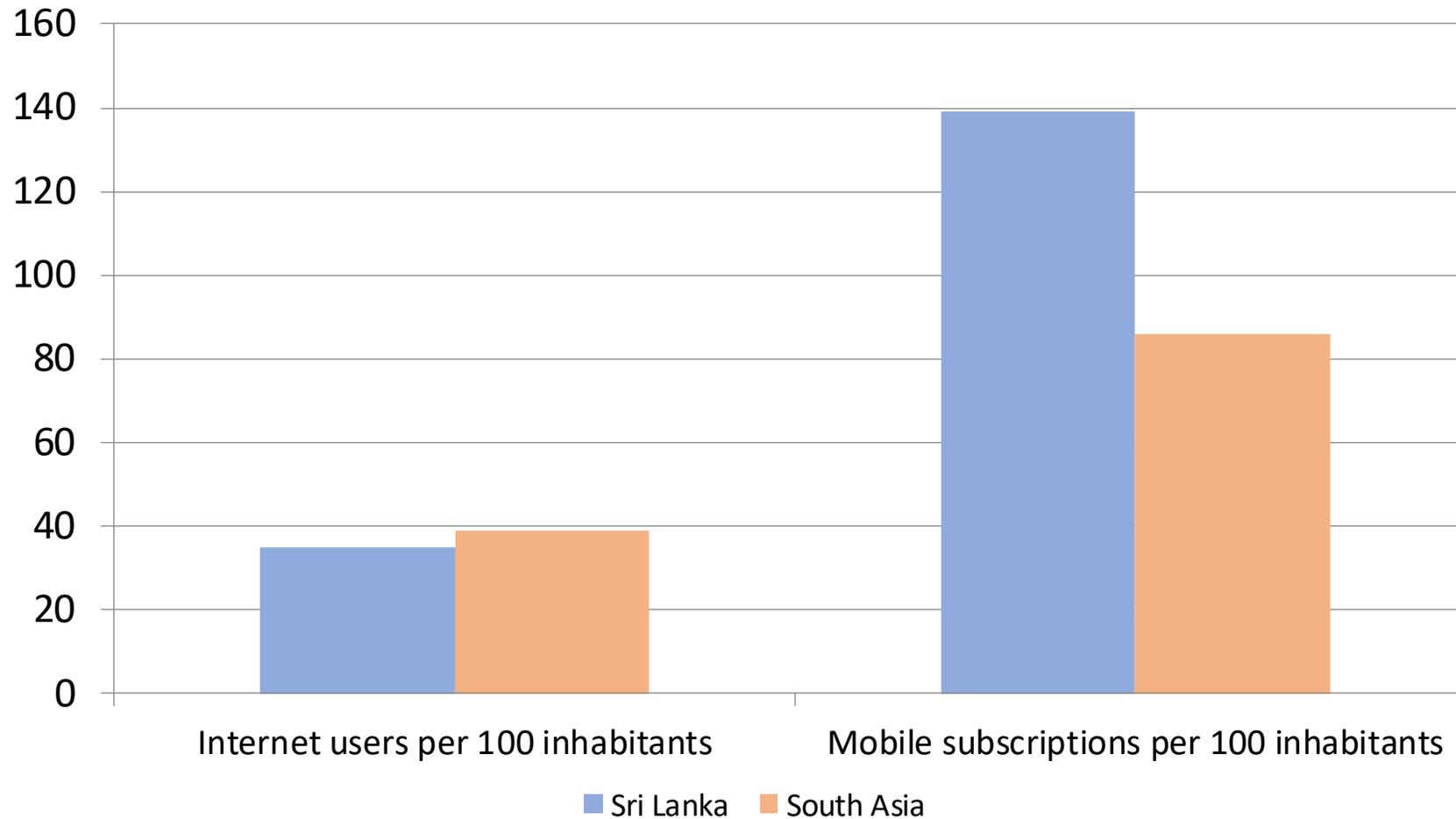


Population of Youth in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has **3.3 million young people** between the ages of 15 and 24: **15.3%** of its population, 2021.

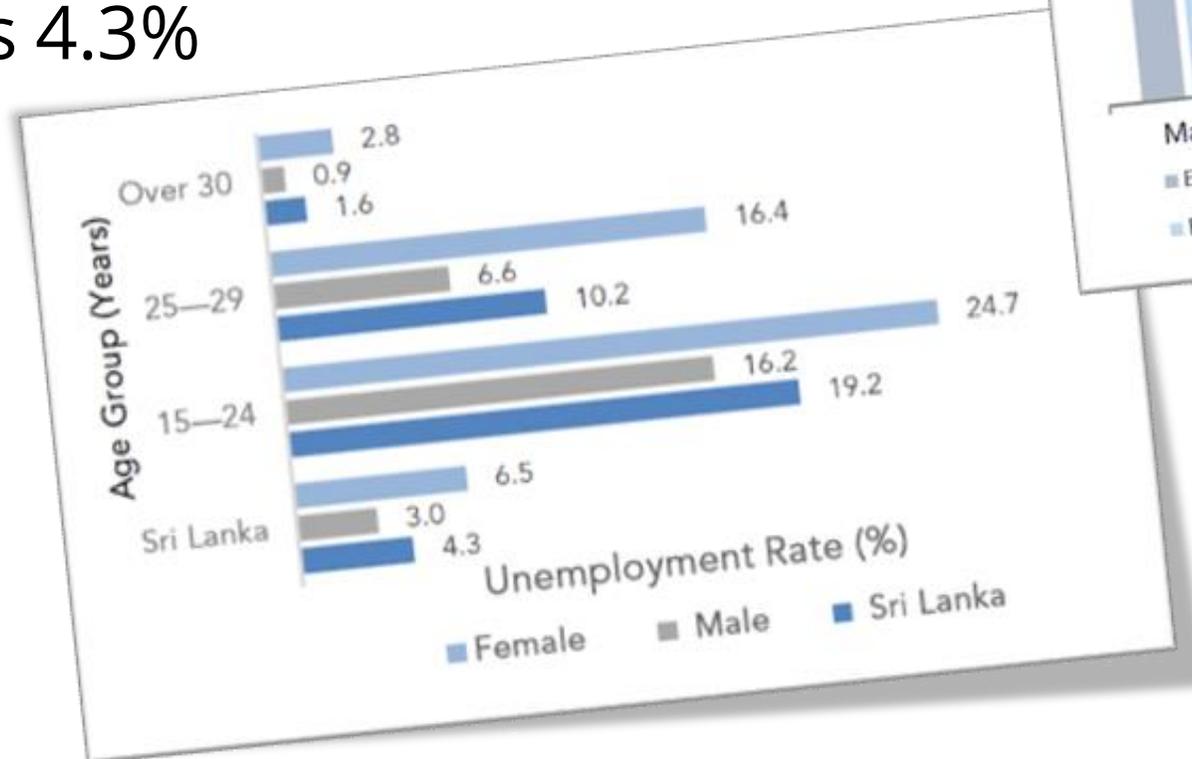


Sri Lanka: ICT Statistics in 2020



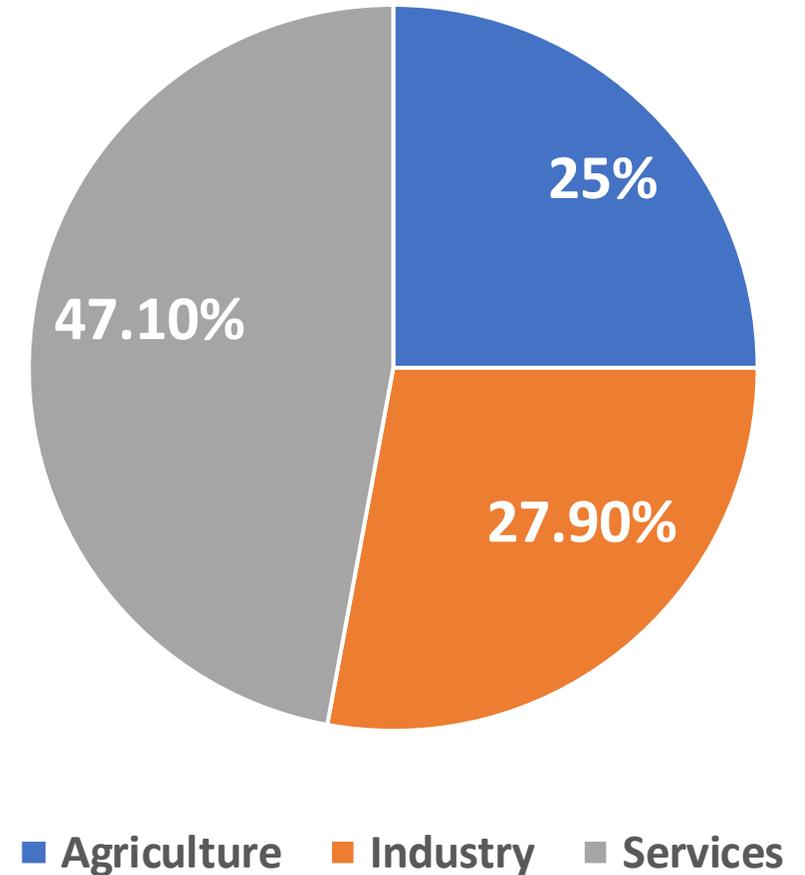
Employment in Sri Lanka

- Labour force participation rate is 51.2% in 2022.
- Unemployment rate is 4.3%
- Only 35% women economically active

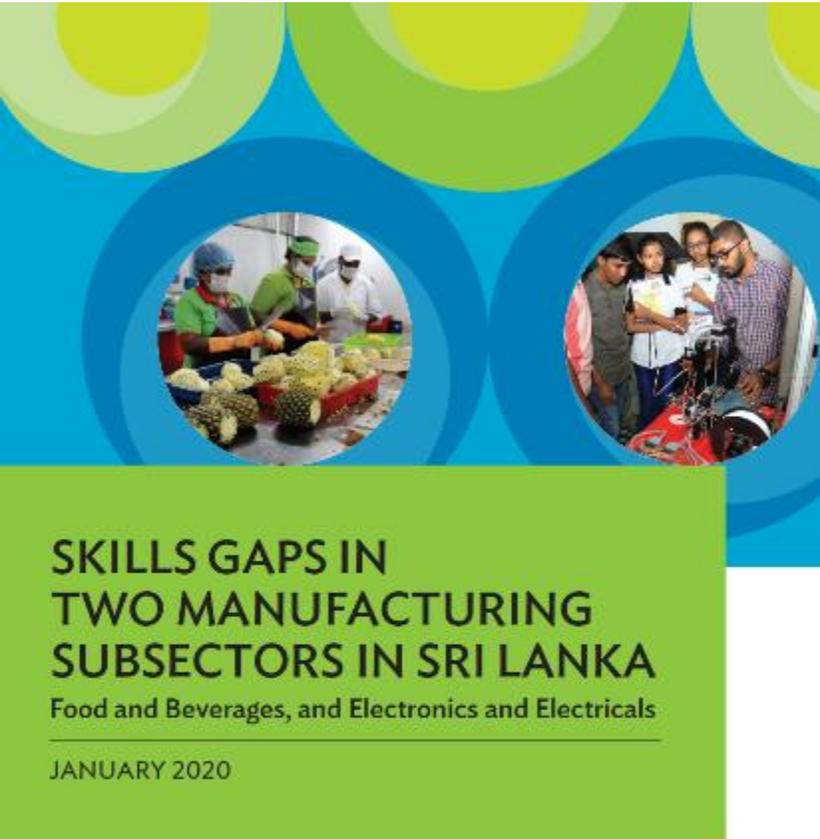


Employment Sector

- Key industries: mining & quarrying, manufacturing, construction
- Key service areas: wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, transportation and storage, accommodation and food services; ICT



Skills gap: example



- Food and beverages sector and electronics and electrical sector increasing demands by 2025
- Dropout rate in these two areas are 51% and 61% respectively

Understanding lifelong learning



“To enhance **access** to high **quality**,
affordable and relevant education...and
ensure **lifelong learning** opportunities to
face challenges in a knowledge society.”

MISSION STATEMENT

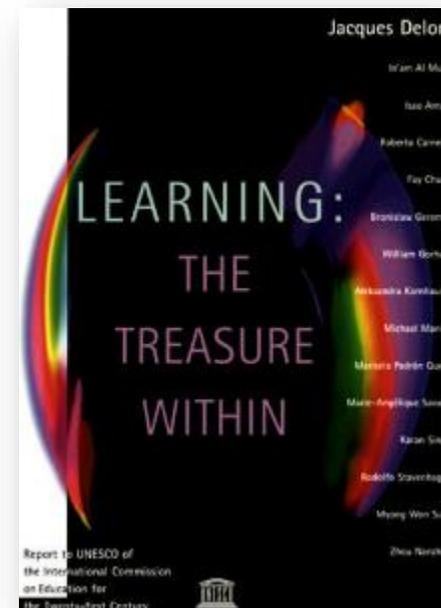
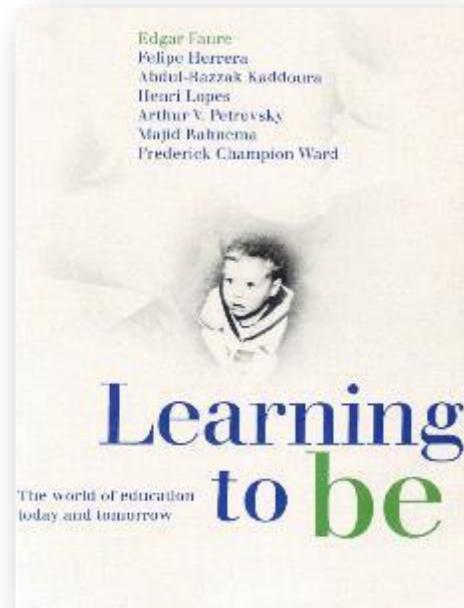


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From Lifelong 'Education' to Lifelong 'Learning'

*Holistic approach to
education not limited to
age or socio-economic
groups*

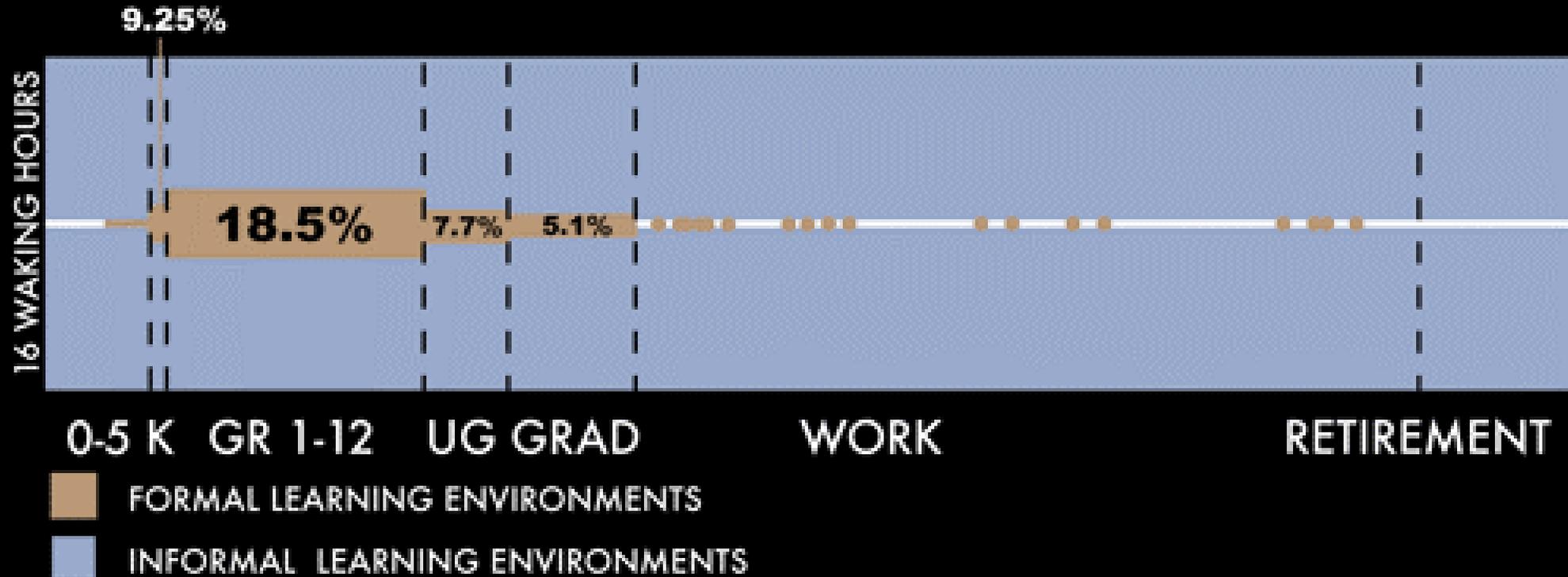
Edgar Faure Report



*Learning throughout life
Learning to know; learning
to do, learning to be;
learning to live together*

Delors Report, UNESCO

LIFELONG AND LIFEWIDE LEARNING



Three Dimensions of Lifelong Learning



When?

Life phases: from cradle to grave; life-wide



How?

Modality of delivery: formal, non-formal, informal



What?

Learning domains: personal, social, cultural, developmental



Australia



Singapore



South Africa

Where are we?

Lifelong Learning in 3 countries



Australia



Aim: Develop skills, upskill and reskill citizens for a dynamic economy



Focus: Strong economic and industrial orientation



Programmes/Mechanisms:

- National Foundation Skills Strategy (for adults)
- Open Access College



Challenges: No comprehensive national policy



Good Practice: AQF & Recognition of Prior Learning

- The AQF a national framework for formal and vocational education and training
- Includes Recognition of Prior Learning
- Review of AQF in 2019 recognized that credit recognition of micro-credentials is a preferred way for promoting lifelong learning





Singapore



Aim: To build a competitive economy by investing in Singaporeans to develop their fullest potential throughout life



Focus: Skilling and reskilling the workforce



Programmes/Mechanisms:

- Government subsidies on training
- Support for career guidance, job searches, placements



Challenges: Lack of ownership of government schemes by employers



Good Practice: Incentivising Lifelong Learning



S\$1 billion

Annual SkillsFuture
funding per year from
2015-2020



S\$500

Initial credit per citizen
to be used for agency-
approved courses



90%

Subsidy for training
costs of Singaporeans
aged 40+





South Africa



Aim: To contribute to economic growth and address inequity resulting from apartheid



Focus: Skills development and learner mobility



Programmes/Mechanisms:

- National Policy and Strategy
- NQF
- Khetha: career advice portal



Challenges:

Tension between learning for social equality vs. economic growth



Good Practice: Open & Distance Learning

“to meet the challenge of lifelong learning successfully, we need to reorganize the delivery of education and training within an open learning framework.”

African National Congress, 1995: 77



To sum up...



- Countries develop policies/strategies within a visionary framework, but adopt a utilitarian approach
- Lifelong learning is understood differently in different contexts
- Strategies: QF, Incentives, ODL
- More emphasis on formal education and training

Role of ODL





ODL for skilling and reskilling

- Learning to learn online
- Providing just-in-time training for livelihoods
- Learner support essential

**COL-Coursera
Workforce Recovery
Programme**



ODL for poverty alleviation

- Targeted to 50,000 rural villagers
- Evidence of increase in income, enterprise profit, employment opportunities



Practices of poverty alleviation by open and distance education: a case report from the Open University of China

Chuanjin Ju, Songyan Hou, Dandan Shao, Zhijun Zhang and Zhangli Yu

Source: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/AAOUJ-09-2021-0110/full/html>





Every \$1 invested resulted in \$8 worth of income and assets



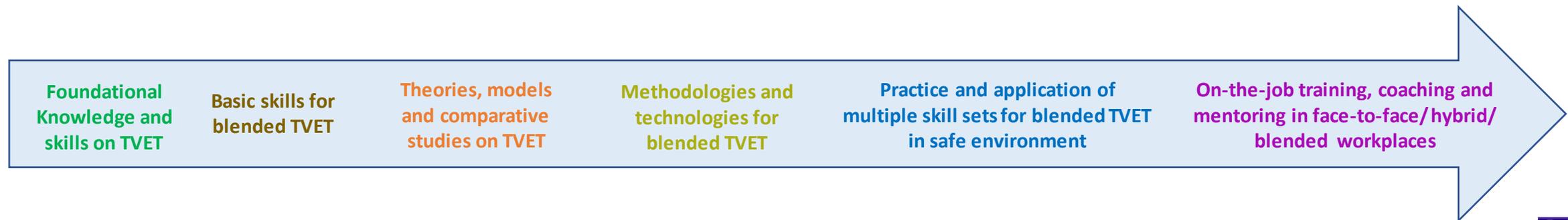
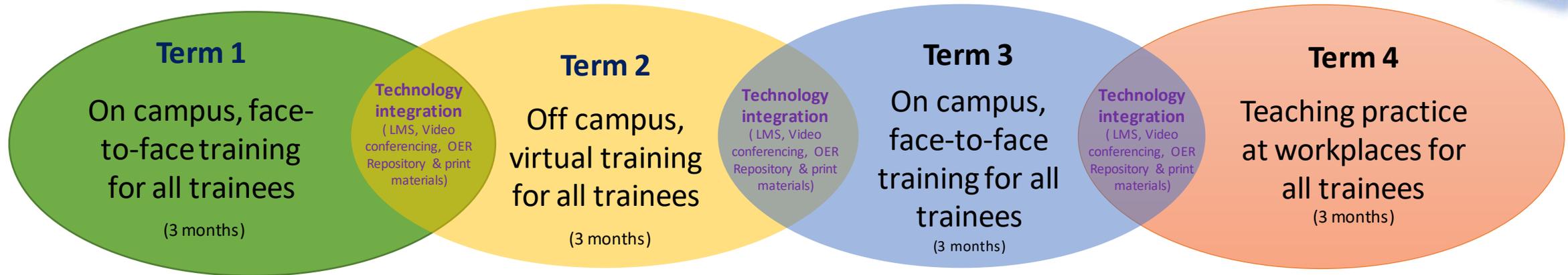
Nilmini Ekanayake

As a result of the opportunities, knowledge and skills building training I received through the COL's GIRLS Inspire project at Women's Development Centre, I'm now the owner of a successful business in both ladies' shoes, bags and purses. My son with special needs is helping me in my production.

Before I joined with WDC, I didn't have a target or a focus on how to face my life challenges and was really stressed out especially as mother of a special needs child. But now I've gained respect and recognition from the society as a successful, knowledgeable and confident woman entrepreneur.



Blended Learning Model at the KSTVET



Need for transformation





**United
Nations**



Transforming Education Summit

United Nations, New York, 16, 17 & 19 September 2022

1

Address
'learning loss'

2

Promote
equity and
inclusion

3

Achieve digital
transformation

4

Review
curricula and
pedagogies

5

Support
psycho-social
well-being





Digital technologies

Engaging, multi-channel hybrid model

>900m reached through tech-enabled learning platforms and more than 2m people deliver microcurricula



Collaborative ecosystem

Partnerships among educators, employers, and government

300,000 school-industry partnerships



Enhanced vocational track

Competitive and flexible pathways for students and adults, higher quality teachers

>80% of teachers have industry experience



Shift in mindset and incentives

Culture of lifelong learning for individuals and employers

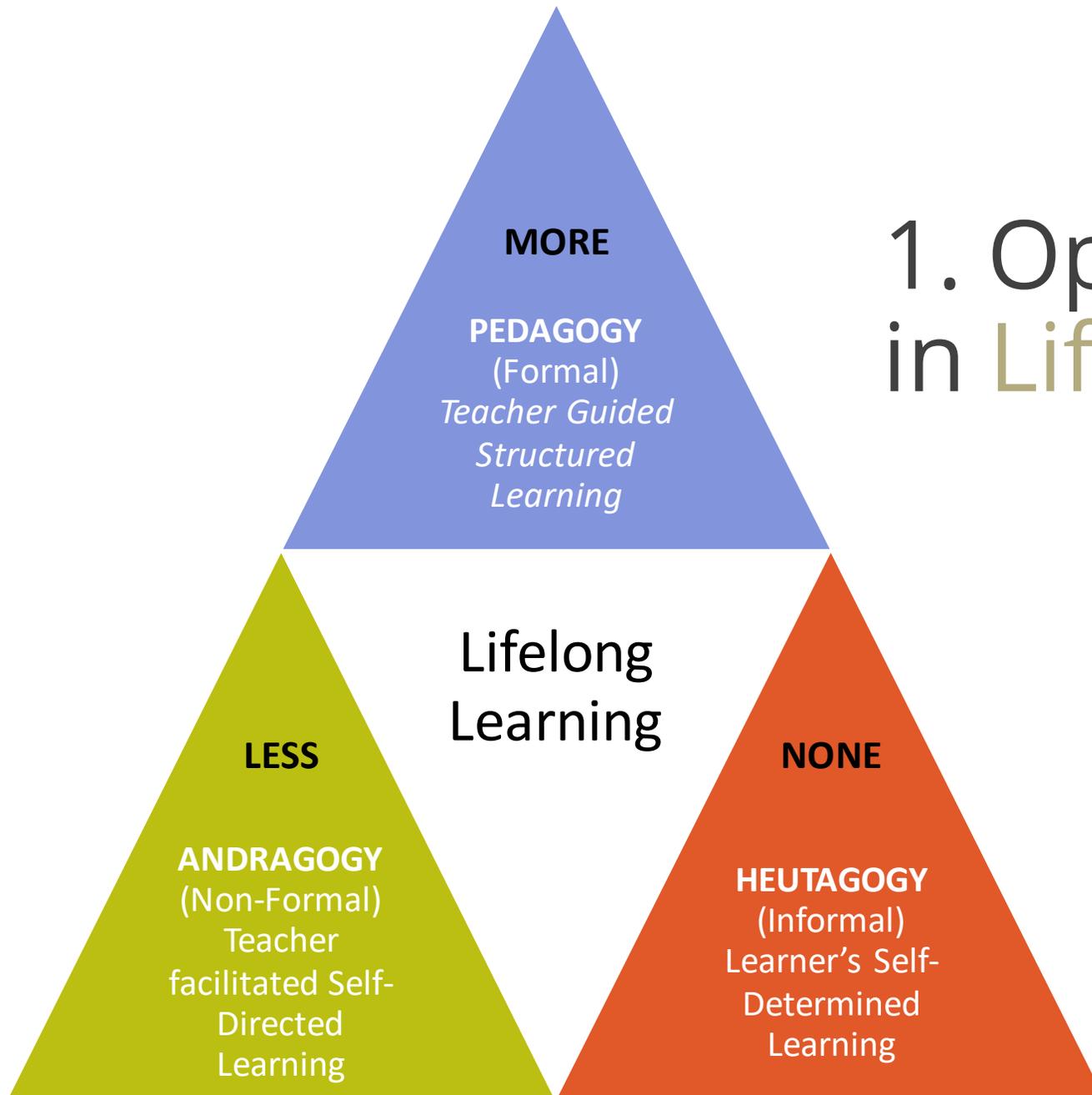
All eligible for skills development subsidy

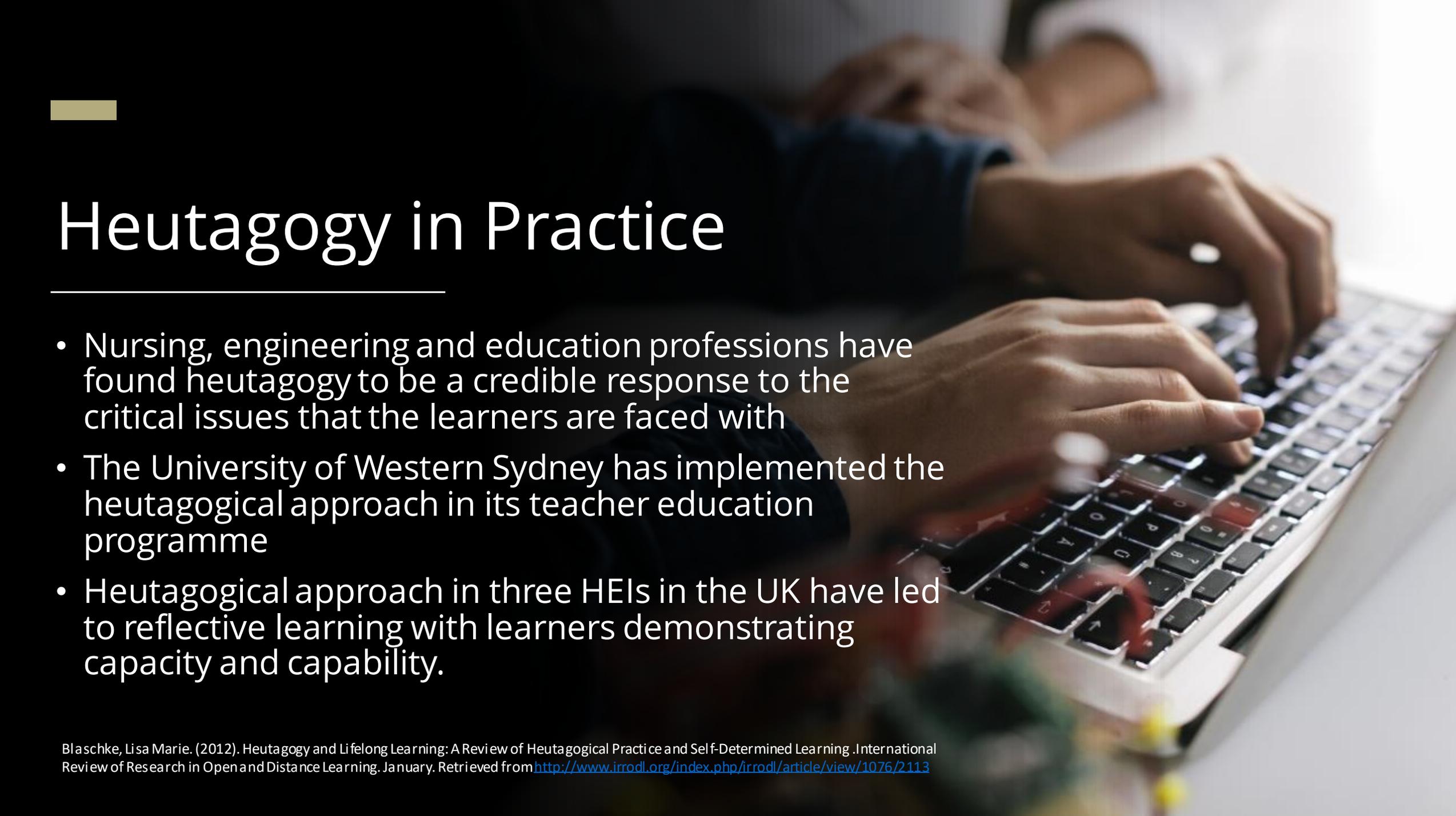
Implementing a new system needs a national leading group, local delivery units, and deeper engagement from employers, including those in the private sector

McKinsey
Global Institute

Four levers for transformation

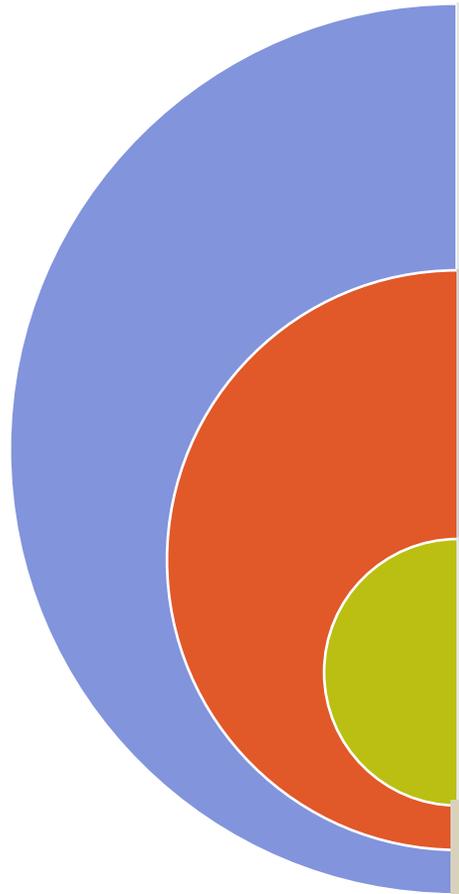
1. Open Universities in Lifelong Learning



A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The person is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt. The background is blurred, showing other people in a classroom or lecture hall setting. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an indoor environment with windows.

Heutagogy in Practice

- Nursing, engineering and education professions have found heutagogy to be a credible response to the critical issues that the learners are faced with
- The University of Western Sydney has implemented the heutagogical approach in its teacher education programme
- Heutagogical approach in three HEIs in the UK have led to reflective learning with learners demonstrating capacity and capability.



Formal

- Teacher Led
- Sequential
- Evaluated

Informal

- Learner led
- Not evaluated
- Tacit knowledge

Non-Formal

- Structured
- Not usually evaluated

2. Integrate formal, informal and non-formal learning

3. Green learning agenda



A new
green
learning
agenda

Skills for green jobs

Skills aimed at fulfilling the requirements of green jobs and supporting the transition to a low-carbon green economy

Green life skills

Cross-cutting skills that serve both technical, instrumental, and adaptive, transformative ends

Skills for a green transformation

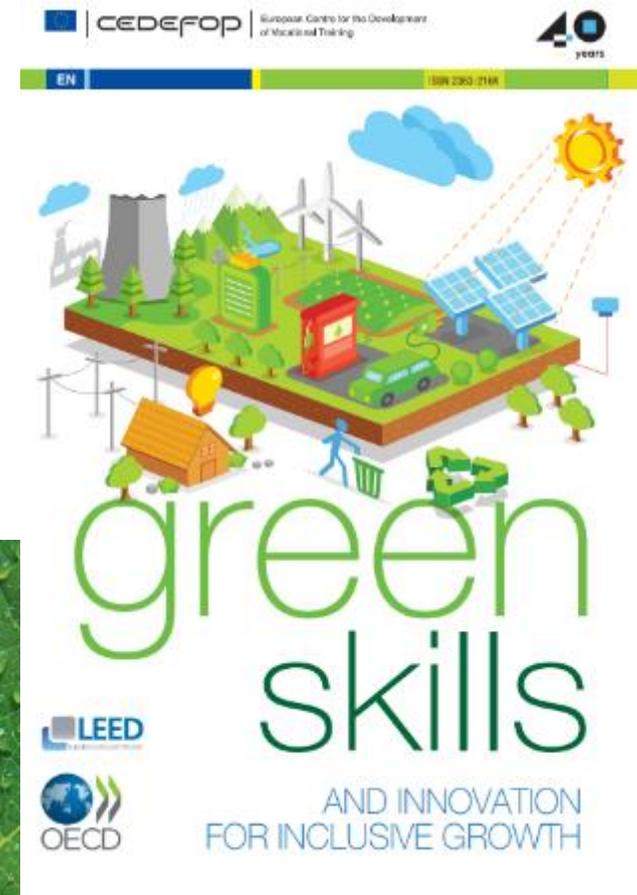
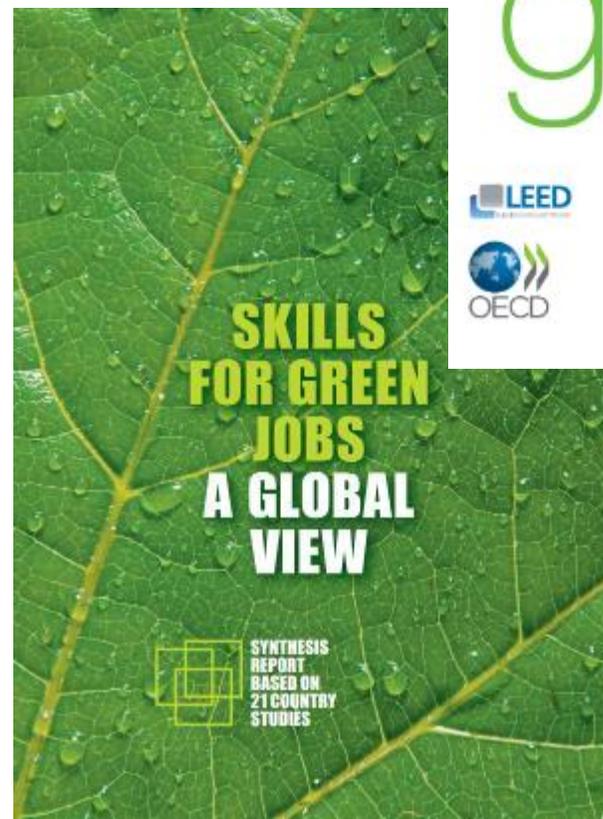
Adaptive skills aimed at transforming unjust social and economic structures



Focus on Green Skills

- Renewable energy
- Air pollution control
- Sewage and waste management
- Environmental control system
- Financial skills to quantify environmental impact
- Policy and leadership skills for green economy

Source: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_159585.pdf



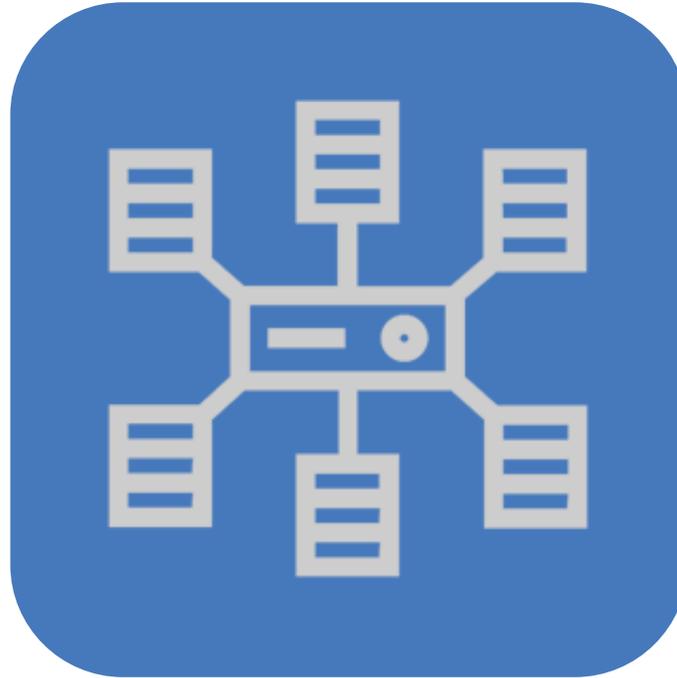
4. Top skills in demand

- Problem solving
- Self-management
- Working with people
- Technology use and development

Three Key Literacies



Human



Data

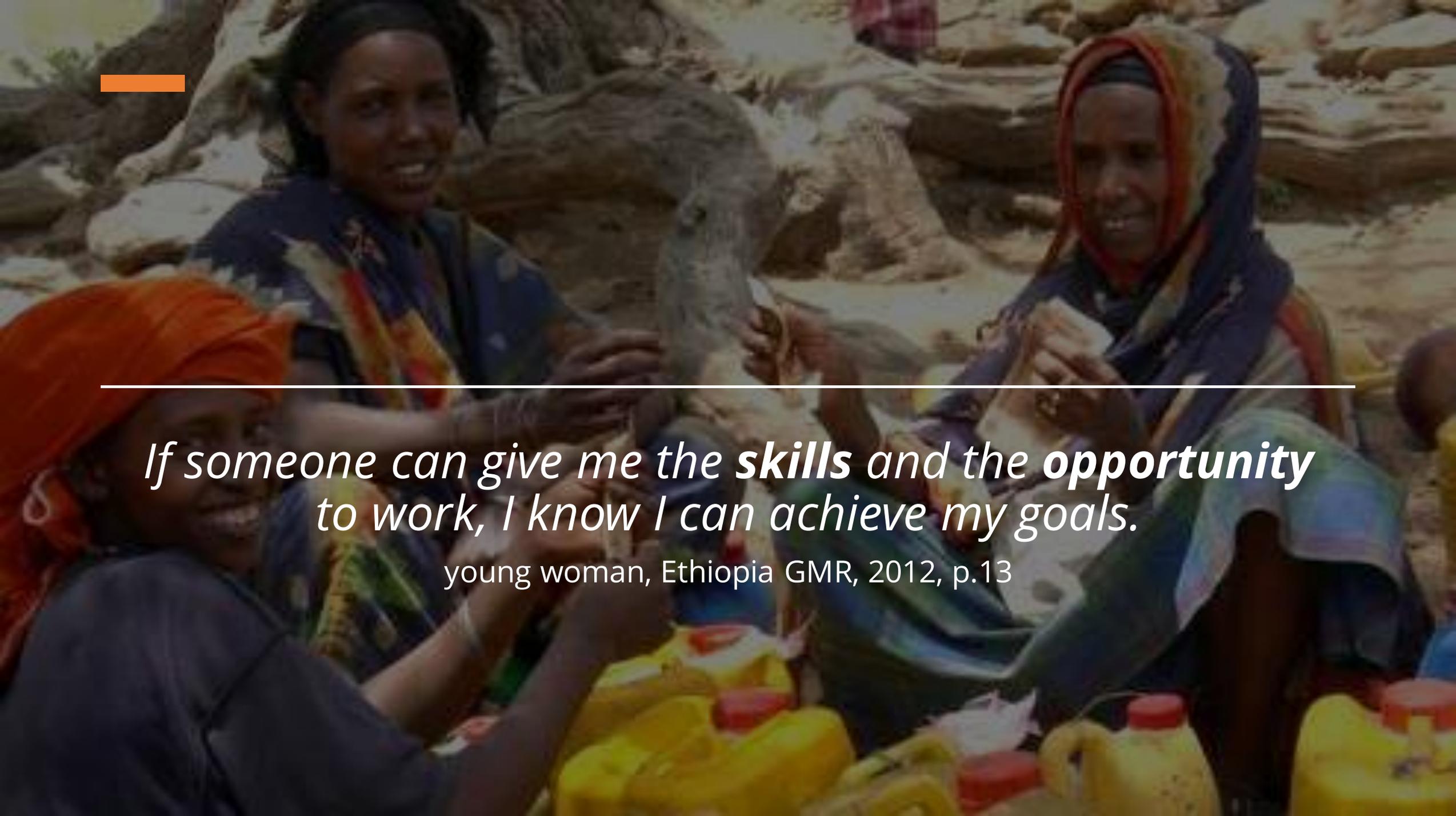


Technological

OUSL leadership in...

- Interacting with industry to develop relevant courses for employability
- Addressing skill gaps with just-in-time training
- Revising assessment to include recognition of prior learning
- Offering micro-credentials as a flexible pathway for promoting skills development
- Using appropriate ICT tools for providing virtual/blended skills training





*If someone can give me the **skills** and the **opportunity** to work, I know I can achieve my goals.*

young woman, Ethiopia GMR, 2012, p.13



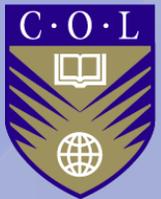
COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING
Certificate of Appreciation
Mrs. Karthikeyan Arora

You have been a source of inspiration for lifelong learning. You have
shown that education and learning can be a joyous, widely lasting and
enriching experience. Your persistence in doing this makes you a true role model
for Kerala State Library Mission. We are proud to honor you and your
wonderful efforts to improve literacy across the Commonwealth.

Dr. Chitra S. Srinivasan
President
Commonwealth of Learning
New Delhi, India



Thank you



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