



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COUNTRY REPORT
2021-2023 | **AFRICA**



Seychelles

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 African member countries' efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG4. It's supporting the governments and institutions of Africa 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 in Africa (Botswana, The Gambia, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and Seychelles) 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 complement the three pathways of change COL is focusing on in achieving impact for each African member country. These are:

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

INTRODUCTION

A small state of the Commonwealth with a population of over 100,000 ([World Bank, 2022](#)), Seychelles has played a major role in the establishment and expansion of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

COL's work in Seychelles is primarily in the areas of higher education through the VUSSC network, teacher education and technology-enabled learning (TEL) and benefits from programmes offered by COL's regional centre, the Southern African Development Community's Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE). Learners from Seychelles are also participating in COL's free, open online courses and have access to other available resources.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in Seychelles include:

- Ministry of Education
- Seychelles Institute of Art and Design
- Seychelles Institute of Distance and Open Learning (SIDOL)
- Seychelles Nurses and Midwives Council (SNMC)
- University of Seychelles (UNISEY)

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- His Excellency Danny Faure named new Chair of COL's Board of Governors.
- Report "Towards a New Model of Schooling in Seychelles" was published.
- 393 nurses/midwives in Seychelles successfully completed one or more professional development courses.

KEY CONTACTS

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

His Excellency Danny Faure
Chair, COL Board of Governors
Former President of the
Republic of Seychelles
COL Honorary Fellow

FOCAL POINT

Mrs Vicky Michel
Chief Liaison Officer
Ministry of Education

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with COL, organised a three-week Training of Trainers online workshop on Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action (C-DELTA). There were 37 participants. [Aug 2021]

The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development requested COL to support the review of its schooling system and propose reforms. The report “Towards a New Model of Schooling in Seychelles” was presented to the Hon. Minister Dr Justine Valentin in November 2021.

Dr Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, United Nations Environment Programme, Geneva (Chair) and The Honourable Dr Justin D. Valentin, Minister of Education provided guidance and contributed to discussions in the high-level panels on Climate Change and Education organised by COL that would 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 provided support for the Ministry of Education and Training (MoE) in Seychelles to revise the ICT in Education and Training Policy 2012-2019. The revised ICT in Education and Training policy 2022-2027 was submitted to the Minister of Education in July 2022. The Information Communications Technology (ICT) in Education and Training Policy 2022 – 2027, finalised in consultation with COL, was approved by the Cabinet of the Government of Seychelles on October 12, 2022. The policy details the ministry’s plan to use technology to improve education and its services and include ICT in their curriculum. [Nov 2022]

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

COL’s Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration and Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) Programme’s goal is to deliver high-quality learning and professional development opportunities – with our Commonwealth Partner Institutions – that complement existing MBA/MPA programmes. UNISEY is a partner institution. In mid-2022, nine course materials were redeveloped. They include Enterprise Information Systems and Digital Strategy, Management in Organization, People and Talent Management, Operations Management, New Public Management and Governance, Data Analysis for Decision making, Marketing Management, Accounting Issues and Financial Management for Business Decisions, and Disaster Management.

Recognising the role of universities in the post-Covid environment, the fourth edition of the Vice-Chancellor’s Roundtable, which focused on “Quality Higher Education for Sustainable Development, was held in July 2022. This two-day event, jointly organised by COL and Asia eUniversity (AeU), Malaysia, provided an opportunity to share and learn from peers and develop collaborative action plans. 33 leaders from 17 countries participated, including Ms Joelle Perreau from UNISEY.

On May 20-21, 2022, COL organised a workshop on Open Educational Resources as part of the support provided to the Ministry of Education on the implementation of the ICT in Education policy and strengthening of the Seychelles Institute of Distance and Open Learning (SIDOL). The workshop was inaugurated by Dr Justine Valentin, Honourable Minister of Education, Seychelles. 23 government staff were trained.

COL is supporting the Seychelles Institute of Distance and Open Learning (SIDOL) in strengthening its capacity in open distance and eLearning (ODEL) as part of a special ICT augmentation process to build institutional resilience. A workshop on "Developing Blended Courses using Moodle" was held in mid-2022, where 32 institutional staff (7M/25F) participated. The second cohort was held in January 2023 with an additional 27 participants enrolled.

Four Special Needs teachers and education officers from Seychelles successfully completed the six-week online train-the-trainers course for disability practitioners developed through COL's VUSSC initiative [Feb2023]

COL facilitated two workshops in Seychelles with TVET Leaders from 8 professional colleges, the Ministry of Education (four female and one male) and the Seychelles Qualification Authority (five female) to establish the extent to which ODL approaches and methodologies are integrated into institutional TVET policy, strategy and practice, and, to initiate strategic partnerships for Skills for Work activities in the country. Participants included eight directors (five female and three male) of The Guy Morel Institute (TGMI), Seychelles Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture (SIAH), National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS), Seychelles Institute of Open and Distance Learning (SIDOL), Seychelles Institute of Arts and Design (SIAD), Seychelles Business Studies Academy (SBSA), Seychelles Maritime Academy (SMA), Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE) and Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT). [Apr 2023]

REGIONAL CENTRE: SADC-CDE

26 senior officials comprising representatives from universities participated in the high-level workshop on developing effective OER policies for the SADC region from 20-21 June 2022 in Gaborone.

In February 2022, a seminar was organised on "The Future of open and distance e-learning (ODEL) in higher education institutions in the 21st Century: Challenges and opportunities" to sensitise the institution staff at 16 SADC member states (including 11 Commonwealth countries).

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

From January 2022 to January 2023, COL partnered with the Seychelles Nurses and Midwives Council (SNMC) to provide online, context-specific continuing professional development modules for nurses and midwives. The online learning platform was available through the World Continuing Education Alliance (WCEA) and enabled nurses and midwives to gain extra skills and higher levels of competencies, thereby improving the quality of health services delivered to patients in Seychelles. 393 nurses and midwives successfully completed one or more courses.

Between the 2021-2022 academic years, 20 new students enrolled in the two-year CEMBA/MPA programme at UNIESEY.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Minister of Education, Dr Justin Valentin, hosted the COL High Level High-Level Panel meeting on **climate change and education** where the 'Transforming Education for Climate Action: Report to Commonwealth Ministers of Education' was finalised. (May 2022)

An **ICT centre was launched** at the Seychelles Institute of Distance Learning with COL's support (May 2022)

Ms Joëlle Perreau from UNISEY participated in the **High-Level Roundtable for Vice Chancellors & Heads of ODL Institutions** from 29-30 July 2022 in Penang, Malaysia.

COL's Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning is held triennially and is co-hosted with different partners in different regions of the Commonwealth. Two delegates from Seychelles registered for the **Tenth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF10)**, the first-ever hybrid Forum held in Calgary, Canada from 14-16 September 2022. Both were sponsored by COL. Dr Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, gave the Keynote Address: Building Resilience and was on the Panel: Transforming Education for Climate Change at PCF10. The other participant included Nuette Gordon from the University of Seychelles.

Seychelles hosted COL's **Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and Europe** from 20-21 February 2023. Official representatives from 20 Commonwealth countries in the region participated in the two-day meeting, with the Honourable Minister of Education, Dr Justin Valentin, inaugurating the meeting.

His Excellency Danny Faure, former President of the Republic of Seychelles, was named **Chair of COL's Board of Governors** on 2 March 2023. As Minister of Education at the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM) held in 2000, HE Danny Faure mooted the idea of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and, at the next CCEM held three years later, strongly advocated for COL to be the lead agency in implementing this initiative. He continued his interest and support for VUSSC through other cabinet posts and at international forums as a champion for small states. HE Danny Faure represented Africa on COL's Board from January 2014 to December 2016.

PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

Towards a New Model of Schooling in Seychelles <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/3981>

Report on the Regional Focal Points Meeting - Africa and Europe <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5316>

May 2022: <https://www.col.org/news/12551/>

May 2022: <https://www.col.org/news/the-col-open-distance-and-e-learning-centre-inaugurated-in-seychelles/>

May 2022: <https://www.col.org/news/transforming-education-for-climate-change-cols-high-level-panel-finalises-the-report-in-seychelles-meeting/>

May 2022: <https://www.col.org/news/seychelles-builds-capacity-in-use-of-open-educational-resources/>

Sep 2022: <https://www.col.org/news/pcf10-panel-discussion-transforming-education-for-climate-change>

Mar 2023: <https://www.col.org/news/danny-faure-named-chair-of-the-board-of-governors-of-the-commonwealth-of-learning/>



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