



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COUNTRY REPORT
2021-2023 | **AFRICA**



Rwanda

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 (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 African member country. These are:

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

INTRODUCTION

Rwanda is an East African country with over 13.7 million people ([World Bank](#), 2022).

COL's work in Rwanda is in the areas of Higher Education, Teacher Education and Skills For Work. Learners from Rwanda are also benefitting from COL's free, open online courses and other available resources.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in Rwanda include:

- Ministry of Education
- Rwanda Basic Education Board
- Rwanda Telecentre Network
- University of Rwanda
- University of Technology and Arts of Byumba

KEY CONTACTS

COL FOCAL POINT

Eng. Pascal Gatabazi
Chief Technical Advisor
Ministry of Education

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2,664 certificates have been issued to learners from Rwanda under the Skills Online programme.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

The University of Rwanda (UR) reported 9,694 enrollments (5,474M/4,220F, among them 11PWD) in the September 2021 offering of 5 Modules developed with COL support.

A blended workshop on rapid online course design and development, facilitated by UNAM CILT, was held at the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB) in September 2021 with 38 participants.

COL organised a workshop in partnership with Inspire, Educate and Empower (IEE) Rwanda to sensitise stakeholders on the benefits of parental and familial involvement in the education of their children on September 15 and 16, 2021 under **COL's Parental Learning for Uninterrupted Schooling (PLUS) project**. It drew 100 participants from 20 school communities in Burera and Gatsibo, two districts which are considered disadvantaged with a combined adult literacy rate that is below the national average. Workshop participants discussed the knowledge, skills and resources needed to

ensure the effective contribution of parents to the learning of their children at different stages, especially the secondary education cycle. Parents and teachers who had participated in the programme shared their experiences during the workshop. *Ms Muzayazire Brigitte, a teacher at Umuyobozi, G.S. Ndama in Gatsibo, observed that the number of students missing classes had reduced because of the sensitisation that had been done from home to home. Another participant, a parent from a village in Gatsibo, noted that the training had made him realise the importance of his role in the good learning results of his children.*

40 teachers participated in the COL MOOC on cybersecurity training for teachers (November 2022).

The University of Rwanda - College of Education hosted a three-day workshop to develop five Open Distance Learning (ODL) STEM courses in May 2023 where 25 participants (6F/19M) were trained.

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, 2,664 certificates have been issued to learners from Rwanda under the Skills Online programme.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Commonwealth leaders met for the first time after four years at the **26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which took place from 20-25 June 2022 in Kigali, Rwanda**. The week-long programme of high-level side events, ministers' meetings and forums – the Commonwealth Youth Forum, the Commonwealth Women's Forum, the Commonwealth Business Forum and the Commonwealth People's Forum – were held in the lead-up to CHOGM. COL President & CEO Professor Asha Kanwar delivered two presentations about COL's work during the Covid-19 lockdown to foreign ministers and senior officials. An impact report and a compendium of country reports were circulated. In addition, Professor Kanwar also spoke at the Youth and Women's Forums.

The **Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and Europe** was held in Seychelles from 20-21 February 2023. Official representatives from 20 Commonwealth countries in the region participated in the two-day meeting.

PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

Out-of-School Parenting Girls' Learning Pathways in Rwanda: Building Resilience through Identity Formation and Mentorship <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5217>

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



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