



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COUNTRY REPORT
2021-2023 | **CARIBBEAN
& AMERICAS**



The Bahamas

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. It's supporting governments and institutions in the Caribbean 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 (Caribbean: Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago) 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 Caribbean member state. These are:

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

INTRODUCTION

The Bahamas is a small state of the Commonwealth in the Caribbean, with a population of about 410,000 ([World Bank](#), 2022).

COL's work in The Bahamas is primarily in the areas of higher education through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) network, Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) and technology-enabled learning. Learners from The Bahamas are also participating in COL's free, open online courses and benefitting from other available resources.

PARTNERS

In The Bahamas, COL's partners include:

- Ministry of Education, Technical and Vocational Training (MOETVT)
- Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI)
- University of The Bahamas

KEY CONTACTS

FOCAL POINT

Mrs. Terrice Carey-Curry
Assistant Director of Education (Acting)
Professional Development Section
Department of Education
Ministry of Education, Technical and Vocational Training

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

COL supported the attendance of members from all 12 commonwealth Caribbean countries to a meeting with Caribbean Association of National Training Authorities (CANTA) to review, validate and approve the Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines for the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) (2023), as well as engage the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) with the aim of approving the reviewed Quality Assurance Criteria and Guidelines for the CVQ. Participants came from ministries, TVET councils, and National Training Agencies. [May 2023]

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

COL launched COLcommons.org in July 2021, a platform with competency-based, professional development micro-courses where learners study at their own pace and time. The platform is designed for collaboration with Commonwealth educational institutions to offer the courses as part of staff training programmes and support building capacities in partner institutions – the University of The Bahamas contributes to this platform.

COL supported the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI) to develop courses in Literacy, Numeracy, Digital Literacy, Entrepreneurship and Personal Development as part of their Employability/Entrepreneurship Readiness Program (EERC). This dual enrolment programme which began in July 2021 with 17 enrolled students, provides young adult participants with an opportunity to develop essential workplace readiness skills. Faculty who completed the COL training are serving as facilitators.

In another project focused on professionalising Youth Work, BTVI staff have completed phase 1 of training activities designed to support their re-purposing of the Youth Work professional development programme. Six courses are 60% complete and are expected to be ready for delivery in early 2022.

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

Learners from The Bahamas are benefitting from COL's open online courses.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

COL invited Pleshette McPhee from the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute to participate in the **4th Pan-Commonwealth Training Programme on Women and Leadership in ODL** in August 2022, in Penang, Malaysia, including an online workshop earlier in the year. The workshop theme was 'Women Leaders: Shaping the future for a sustainable world' with three sub-themes-Leadership, ICTs and Climate Change.

The **Regional Focal Points Meeting for the Caribbean** was held in Kingston, Jamaica from 30-31 January 2023. COL's Focal Point Ms Terrice L. Carey-Curry, Bahamas Ministry of Education and Technical and Vocational Training (MOETVT) participated. The meeting set out to update Focal Points on COL's work in the region and wider Commonwealth, to consult with them on regional and national priorities and to discuss the role of education in promoting a green learning agenda. Many of the regional and national priorities identified by the Focal Points reflect those in COL's Strategic Plan 2021-2027 but common areas of concern included 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.

PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

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



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