

"Impact of Developments in communication technology on educational and social message communication"



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Impact of Developments in communication technology on educational and social message communication

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Message

The Commonwealth of Learning is proud to support the National Convention on 'Impact of Developments in communication technology on educational and social message communication' being organised by the Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC). India is an acknowledged leader in technological developments and these must be appropriately harnessed to increase access, improve quality and cut the costs of higher education in the country.

Fortunately, a series of developments in the use of technology promises to re-shape this 'iron triangle' of access, quality and cost. These developments combine steadily widening access to information and communications technology, which we call connectivity, with new ways of using connectivity in education. I refer not simply to eLearning, but to the blossoming of the Free Open Source Software movement and its application to eLearning.

Institutions wishing to introduce eLearning now have available a range of open source Learning Management Systems (the term for software platforms that support eLearning). Even more importantly, teachers and institutions around the world are creating and sharing learning materials and courses for use on these platforms, known generically as 'reusable learning objects'. The combination of expanding connectivity and the growing reservoir of open educational resources is a revolution (see, for example, www.col.org/lor). Previously the use of technology in developing countries resulted in a transfer of wealth to the developed world: the rich got richer and the poor became poorer. Those days could soon

be over.

Greater connectivity allied to open educational resources could reduce the costs and expand the availability of education to the billions of people at the bottom of the pyramid. India could assume a leadership role in the development of both areas and offer its expertise and resources to other less-technologically developed countries. I would like the distinguished participants to deliberate on these issues and think of appropriate strategies through which this could be achieved.

The Commonwealth of Learning has enjoyed a close partnership with the UGC and we look forward to our continued collaboration in converting the 'digital divide' into a 'digital dividend' for human resource development across the Commonwealth.

I wish you every success in your deliberations.

Sir John Daniel
President & CEO, The Commonwealth of Learning