



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

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



Guyana

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

[Guyana](#) is a small state of the Commonwealth with a population of about 800,000. It is the only Commonwealth nation in mainland South America.

COL's work in Guyana is primarily in the areas of higher education, through the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) network, open schooling, gender, and technology-enabled learning. The University of Guyana offers COL's Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) programmes and serves on the programmes' academic and executive governing boards. Learners from Guyana are also participating in COL's free, open online courses and benefitting from other available resources.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in Guyana include:

- Ministry of Education
- Adult Education Association of Guyana (AEAG)
- Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE)
- National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD)
- Trifinity Solutions
- University of Guyana
- Youth Challenge Guyana (YCG)

KEY CONTACTS

COL FOCAL POINT

Dr Olato Sam
Education Specialist
Ministry of Education

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- National programme launched to scale upskilling based on the success of COL's Skills Online partnerships with Coursera, Grow with Google and Udemy. 14,278 learners have enrolled with 5,230 certificates being issued.
- NCERD launches an online platform for teacher continuous professional development (CPD) with 24 courses.

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

The COL-Coursera Workforce Recovery project was introduced to skill and reskill citizens around the Commonwealth. Building on the success of this partnership, Guyana is one of three governments in the Caribbean that launched a national programme to scale upskilling.

The Honourable Ms Priya Manickchand, Minister of Education provided guidance and contributed to discussions in the high-level panels on Climate Change and Education organized 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 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'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. The University of Guyana 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.

COL is assisting the Adult Education Association of Guyana (AEAG) to reach more students through online offerings and open textbooks derived from online courses. 26 staff members at AEAG have received training on Moodle learning management system. [Mar2023]

More than 70 NAC-G officers, Board members, external evaluators and Quality Assurance personnel drawn from tertiary level institutions in Guyana completed a series of online training workshops designed to familiarise them with standards for the approval or accreditation of ODL programmes in Guyana and use the accompanying tools. Outputs from the workshop included Quality Assurance Standards for Open and Distance Learning in Guyana as well as six tools and templates to support the implementation of the standards. [Aug2021]

COL has been supporting Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) in building institutional capacity to develop and deliver quality online education.

- 13 Faculty Leads from CPCE were trained to work as a community of practice to actualise the potential of their colleagues to effectively plan and teach online courses. As a result of COL training and support, CPCE is offering 26 courses to students on the COLVEE-CPCE Moodle installation. Faculty training in assessment continues. [Jan2022]

- 41 participants from CPCE enrolled in the “Designing and Developing Online Assessments” course offered in January 2022. 12 completed the course.

COL has been supporting the National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD) to train officers and develop teacher professional development courses for online delivery. This training takes place through a series of online workshops and guided synchronous activities utilising the VUSSC’s Developing and Teaching Online Courses (DTOC) course.

- The first two workshops were delivered in January 2022 with 25 participants.
- 24 Education Officers (3m, 21f) completed a series of online workshops and post-workshop to Design, Develop and Deliver Online Courses [Oct2022]
- Between February and August 2022 NCERD has developed 15 teacher professional development courses, available on the COL-provided Moodle platform to be offered to Guyana's in-service teachers. [Oct2022]
- In February 2023, the online platform for teacher continuous professional development (CPD) was launched resulting in 24 courses available.

COL conducted two workshops on Results Based Management (RBM) for 4 staff members at Youth Challenge Guyana (YCG). [Apr2023]

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

During 2021-2022, one student graduated from the 2-year CEMBA/MPA programme at the University of Guyana and 26 new students enrolled in the programme.

Five communities in Guyana were made aware of the new online learning opportunities for out-of-school youth by AEAG and 100 students were enrolled in consequence. [Sep2022]

With COL’s support, Trifinity Solutions produced a 'Web-Development Workbook' to be used in the three-day workshop conducted to increase computer coding education among women and girls in Guyana. [Aug2022]

COL supporting Youth Challenge Guyana (YCG) to empower boys and young men from marginalized communities by increasing their knowledge and skills to gain access to economic opportunities, including the engagement of parents in a community network to support them.

- 15 organizations/institutions were engaged to implement a campaign to increase community support and advocacy for access to learning for men and boys. [Jul2022]
- 19 young men and boys' completed the training in “Hospitality, Arts and Food Preparation”. [Sep2022]
- training in life skills, mentorship and access to employment opportunities (hospitality industry) resulted in 11 young men accessing internships in different businesses. [Jan2023]
- engaged with 4 new organizations/institutions, community centres and other stakeholders to promote capacity-building workshops on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for men and boys

in three areas in Guyana. These include: Child Care and Protection Agency, Church of the Transfiguration, Sophia, Outreach and Community Development Association, and Guyana Trans United. [Jan2023]

- 6 companies to provide internships and jobs to young men and boys: Beacon Café, Petite Four Restaurant, Cigars and Cognac, Camex-Church's Chicken, Java Café and Betencourt's Homemade. [Jan2023]
- 29 parents were brought together in a support network for how to better support their sons and help advocate for increased awareness and access to education. [Jan2023]

As a result of 2021-2022 support from COL to strengthen the capacity of NCERD to offer online professional development courses, to date 479 teachers (83m, 396f) have enrolled in the 24 courses.

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, 14,278 learners from Guyana have enrolled with 5,230 certificates being issued.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

COL invited Debra Lowe from the University of Guyana 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.

COL's Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning is held triennially and is co-hosted with different partners in different regions of the Commonwealth. The Honourable Priya Manickchand, Minister of Education attended the **Tenth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF10)**, the first-ever hybrid Forum held in Calgary, Canada from 14-16 September 2022 and was also conferred a COL Honorary Fellowship.

The **Regional Focal Points Meeting for the Caribbean** was held in Kingston, Jamaica from 30-31 January 2023. COL's Focal Point, Dr Olato Sam from the Ministry of Education participated. The meeting set out to update everyone on COL's work in the region and wider Commonwealth, to consult 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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