



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COUNTRY REPORT
2021-2023 | **AFRICA**



Uganda

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. COL is supporting the governments and institutions of Africa in the use of appropriate and 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

Uganda is a country of about 47 million people in East Africa ([World Bank, 2022](#)). The country's higher education system is one of the oldest in the region. Makerere University was a pioneer in formal open and distance learning (ODL) in higher education.

COL's current work in Uganda is primarily in the areas of higher education, Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F), gender equality and women's empowerment through skills development and technology-enabled learning (TEL). Learners from Uganda are also participating in COL's free, open online courses and benefitting from other resources available.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in Uganda include:

- Ministry of Education and Sports
- African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS)
- Agricultural Innovation System Brokerage Association (AGINSBA)
- Batwas
- Busitema University
- Digital Woman Uganda (DWU)
- Gulu University
- KampaBits
- Kyambogo University
- Makerere University
- Makerere University for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (MUCAES)
- Plavio Uganda (PLAVIO)
- Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
- Siaya SEED Savings and Credit Cooperative
- Uganda Management Institute

KEY CONTACTS

COL FOCAL POINT

Mr Timothy Ssejjoba

Acting Commissioner for University
Education and Training
Ministry of Education and Sports

COL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2021 - MAY 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- A strategy for the digitisation of learning resources, focusing on climate-responsive sustainable livelihoods and food security, has been developed

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

34 government and non-government stakeholders met to discuss the formation of the Learning Innovation Development Platform (LINDEP) for the Maize value chain improvement project. [Feb2023]

50 Government staff/officials/policymakers have been trained/sensitised on gender equality (GI), Gender-Based Violence (GBV), gender-sensitive practices, and grassroots advocacy. [May 2023]

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

COL conducted three two-day workshops on Collaborative Advocacy for return to school for teenage mothers in Kampala, Uganda: 23 (6M/17F) for staff members of partner organisations and their collaborators. [Apr 2023]

COL's Skills for Work initiative, in collaboration with the Kenya Technical Trainers College (KTTC), held a regional workshop on the use of virtual labs in TVET for practitioners from Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia that was held in July 2022. It provided 29 teachers with the necessary skills to incorporate internet-based experimentation in their practice. Learners in science and engineering will have remote access to a real-life simulation-based workshop environment providing them with a deep sense of involvement.

COL L3F partners with the Agricultural Innovation Systems Brokerage Association (AGINSBA):

- organised training to strengthen the capacities of 30 extension staff in facilitating farmer learning through improved understanding of the different approaches and methodologies (L3F, FFS, AIS, IP, ODL, Table banking) for creating incentives for adoption of biochar. [Feb 2023]
- organised training of farmers group facilitators (ToT) to facilitate the capacity building of communities in climate resilient maize farming to improve livelihoods training in improved maize growing with an aspect of climate resilience. 38 group facilitators were trained. [Feb 2023]
- developed three resources to train the farmers' group facilitators (ToT): farm-level production of biochar, biochar-based climate-resilient farming and table banking.

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

COL is supporting KampaBits to empower vulnerable youth from urban settings with ICTs, life & entrepreneurial skills.

- organised job fair, and out of the 90 (54F/36M) youth who participated, 73 (35M/38F) have been linked to job, internship opportunities or freelancing through our numerous employment partners. [Jun 2022]
- 85 unemployed youths (40F/45M) have enrolled in a six-month training on advanced ICT skills in Uganda. This is offered through KampaBits with support from COL. [Mar 2023]

COL's GIRLS Inspire initiative is operational in Uganda and is supporting PLAVIO in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment through skills development for livelihoods and community sensitisation. To date, a total of 1,687 women and girls have been trained; 320 have accessed financial resources such as loans; 580 have opened bank accounts; and 1,152 Community members reached through advocacy events conducted. Activities include:

- 20 village and loan association groups were formed, with 30 people per group; in total, 600 (175M/425F) people were trained on village savings and loans association. [Apr 2022]
- community dialogue was conducted in Lira District to revise gender roles towards ending gender-based violence and other gender-related issues. 21 (10M, 11F) people participated. [Apr 2022]
- 1,441 learners (301M/1,140F) in vocational skills improved sustainable agricultural practices, financial literacy and managing small businesses. Additionally, 299 men and boys were trained in Gender Equality. [Jul 2022]
- 19 community events/dialogues and awareness-raising campaigns on preventing Gender Based Violence, Health & Social Rights, and bringing girls back to school conducted. [Jul 2022]
- COL held a pre-conference workshop at PCF10 in September 2022 with 21 (9m, 12f) participants from 10 countries (Bangladesh, Canada, India, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Uganda), 15 attended in person and 6 joined online. The workshop's objective was to develop a Strategy for Digitization of Learning Resources focusing on Climate and Environmentally Responsive Sustainable Livelihoods and Food Security through a collective discussion on: 1) Improving learning resources using COL's quality standards and aligning it to climate change and environmental protection; 2) Digitisation of the improved learning resources.; 3) Scaling up the use of digitised learning resources for sustainable livelihood and food security.
- PLAVIO Uganda linked 1,750 (350M/1400F) learners to resources, helping them to create saving schemes and to enrol/gain membership in saving. [Feb 2023]

COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative is working with Digital Woman Uganda (DWU), Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) and Makerere University for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (MUCAES) in building the social, human and financial capital of farming communities, especially women, through the use of ODL and appropriate technologies for improved livelihoods security and environmental sustainability. Activities include:

- A total of 2,461 experts participated in the six courses delivered through the RUFORUM Regional E-learning Platform. Female (943), Male (1506) & other (15).
- DWU organised a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on improving grain post-harvest handling and storage was conducted in July 2022 for 20 (14M, 6F) community-based facilitators (CBFs). (Sep 2022)
- DWU organised a workshop on leveraging technology to enhance knowledge and skills of post-harvest management practices among smallholder farmers in eastern Uganda was conducted for 19 (11M, 8F) participants. (Sep 2022)
- DWU trained 20 (14m, 6f) community-based facilitators to manage table banks and empower the Innovation Platform (IP) leaders and farmer group leaders in community table banking and to access rural finance to remain financially sound. [Oct 2022]
- RUFORUM reviewed and improved six courses on Food Systems, with a seventh course developed on Agro Informatics in partnership with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa [Oct 2022]
- organised a meeting for multi-stakeholders of the maize value chain to equip them with knowledge and skills for implementing biochar-based Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) in maize-legume annual cropping systems in Kamuli district, Uganda. 34 stakeholders attended.
- AGINSBA established 36 partnerships for the LINDEP's for the Honey Value Chain and the livelihood approaches that address malnutrition among children below the age of five years through the production and consumption of nutrient-dense foods from both plant and animal sources among the Batwa communities in Rubanda and Kisoro District.
- 18 community members participated in a sensitisation and awareness meeting organised by AGINSBA on improving the livelihoods of Batwa and the preservation of their culture to combat and reverse the trends to their extinction in the Rubanda District Local Government.
- MUCAES identified ten partners from different financial institutions, input dealers and output marketers in Kampala, Kabale and Rubanda for the establishment of the Learning Innovation Development Platform (LINDEP) and to supply services to farmers. [Feb 2023]
- MUCAES organised a workshop on 4th January 2023 to develop strategies to increase productivity, support innovation and develop new ideas in financing mechanisms for women, youths and the marginalised. 12 people attended. [Feb 2023]
- MUCAES designed three MobiMOOCs on post-harvest technologies, improved water management and proper agronomic practices for potatoes. [Feb 2023]

Since 2021, 5,138 students have enrolled in the blended or TEL-related courses being offered at Uganda Management Institute. [Feb 2023]

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

COL's Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning is held triennially and is co-hosted with different partners in different regions of the Commonwealth. **Nine delegates from Uganda 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. Four were sponsored by COL. Delegates included: Agatha Alidri, Gulu University; Milburga Atcero, Makerere University Business

School; Muyanja Charles, Makerere University; Dave Dhrukaben Shaileshkumar, Shree Sanatan Dharma Mandal; Alok Jakob, Plavio Uganda; Moses Mwebaze, Kampala School of Paramedicals; Leah Namarome Sikoyo, Makerere University; Geoffrey Olok Tabo, Gulu University; Leonard Wambi Wamakote, Busitema University.

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

Report on the Regional Focal Points Meeting - Africa and Europe

<http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5316>



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