



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

COL in the Commonwealth

**2012–2015
Tonga**

Acknowledgements

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Foreword


COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports summarises COL's activities over the last three years (2012-2015) and captures what we have achieved in each Member State and across the Commonwealth.

This volume is the result of a collaborative process that began in 2011 with extensive partner consultations. Following these consultations, a *Country Action Plan* was developed to guide COL's work in each country. The reports contained in this volume describe the implementation of these plans and highlight COL's achievements during this three year plan.

The reports cover all Member States of the Commonwealth, showing not only what COL has done in developing countries but also how its work aligns with the international development priorities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The reports are grouped under four regions: Africa and the Mediterranean, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Each regional section contains a brief regional report as well as the reports for each country within that region. The Pan-Commonwealth section describes COL's Initiatives, under the two sectors: 'Education' and 'Livelihoods and Health'. The reports for this triennium categorise COL activities according to our five core strategies: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy, in order to better present how our work contributes to outcomes. 'COL in Action' highlights real life examples to illustrate how COL's work impacts on people, groups and institutions in developing countries.

Most of the initiatives that COL pursued during this triennium are showing demonstrable results in expanding and improving opportunities for education and training, building healthier communities, helping rural communities achieve greater prosperity, and contributing to skills development. As the external Impact Evaluation report states: 'COL has had a major impact on individuals including farmers...faculty members, institutional leaders in formal and non-formal learning, selected policy makers and educational administrators'(S. Murgatroyd with J. Tully, 2015). The external Outcome Evaluation concludes that 'all the Initiatives moved successfully forward, on time and within budget' (N. Kemp and G. Farrell, 2015). Both evaluations confirm that COL is highly respected and well regarded in the field.

The production of *COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports* was made possible through collective effort and collaboration. Partners on the ground have diligently provided updates to COL. COL staff have tracked and assessed results obtained from partners through a thorough monitoring and evaluation process. COL's advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to capture information from numerous sources and synthesise this into the reports that make up this volume. I must particularly commend Alexis Carr for her diligent work in filtering the masses of raw data and converting them into a coherent and meaningful narrative.



Professor Asha S. Kanwar
President and Chief Executive Officer
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CONTEXT

The Kingdom of Tonga is a small state of the Commonwealth made up of 176 islands with a population of just over 105,000. Tonga has made good progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and recognises the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to support development and education. Tonga contributes to COL's budget.



AGREED PRIORITIES

- ▶ Develop modules for information and communications technology (ICT) teacher education to be delivered to untrained graduate teachers in the outer islands and main district areas
- ▶ Train teachers to develop online materials at higher education levels
- ▶ Build capacity to upskill teachers in using ICTs in teaching and learning
- ▶ Establish new physical infrastructure in the Tonga Institute of Higher Education to provide technical support to train teachers to use ICT and to deliver technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curriculum programmes



OUTCOMES ACHIEVED BY COL

- ▶ 11 new VUSSC courses made available
- ▶ Audio content for the Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course developed



COL'S WORK RELATED TO MDG TARGETS

National MDG Targets Addressed by COL

- ▶ Make available the benefits of new technologies, especially for information and communications
- ▶ Address the special needs of small island developing states

COL's Work on Tonga's MDG Targets

- ▶ VUSSC is committed to the collaborative development of open content resources for education, training and capacity-building, and the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) to broaden access to education



QUICK NOTES

COL Focal Point:

- ▶ Lady Siatukimoana Vaea, Ministry of Education and Training

Areas of COL's Work in Tonga:

- ▶ Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)
- ▶ Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)



HIGHLIGHTS

COL has identified five core strategies to achieve outcomes and impact: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy. In practice, most COL activities incorporate more than one of these strategies and, in some cases, all five. However, for ease of reference, activities have been classified in only one of the five categories.

PARTNERSHIPS

COL partners with government agencies, public institutions, civil society and other organisations to improve and extend teaching and learning services to people in the developing Commonwealth.

- ▶ Ministry of Education and Training
- ▶ University of the South Pacific
- ▶ PACFOLD regional centre

CAPACITY

Capacity development pervades all COL activities and COL focuses primarily on human resource development.

- ▶ Cost and Financing for Open Schools
- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation for VUSSC
- ▶ Gender Mainstreaming for Open Schools
- ▶ Flexible Approaches to TVET

MATERIALS

Materials refer to learning and teaching resources including course materials, toolkits and frameworks. Materials are produced through collaboration with partners, or by partners themselves with COL support.

- ▶ Legislative Drafting Programme
- ▶ 11 new VUSSC courses made available
- ▶ Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course

MODELS

A model is a coherent set of structures and processes that has been shown to work in more than one context to achieve specific results. Models can range from broad approaches to more specific instruments.

- ▶ Transnational Qualifications Framework

OTHER

- ▶ Speeches and presentations



LOOKING FORWARD: 2015–2021

In the lead-up to the 2014 Regional Focal Points Meeting, COL's Focal Point for Tonga was asked to identify the country's top priorities and what COL can do to further support the national agenda of Tonga. The following areas were identified:

- ▶ Promotion of teacher training and professional development
- ▶ Provision of skilled labour training to help grow the economy, boost productivity, improve standards of living

in families and communities, and meet the niche labour markets overseas

- ▶ Provision of support for quality assurance and assessment
- ▶ Provision of support for research and leadership
- ▶ Restructuring of higher education

Appendix: COL's Activities in Tonga

PARTNERSHIPS

VUSSC (Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth)

Tonga is a member of VUSSC.

University of the South Pacific, Tonga: Open Schooling

In November 2012, a desktop review of existing documentation on secondary school provision in Tonga was undertaken and discussions were held with the management team at the **USP Tonga Campus** and **Ministry of Education and Training** officials to discuss the development of the College of Open Schooling at the USP Campus and to discuss a National Policy for Open Schooling. Following the discussions, a proposal for the establishment of the College of Open Schooling was developed.

Pacific Centre for Flexible and Open Learning for Development (PACFOLD)

COL and the University of the South Pacific (USP) agreed to establish a regional centre to strengthen the use of open and distance learning (ODL) in formal, non-formal and informal learning, particularly in skills development, health and agriculture. The aim is to add value to the development process in the region. The centre is based at the Regional Centre for Continuing & Community Education (RCCCE) at USP in Suva. However, the Pacific Regional Centre for ODL is designed to meet the needs of the whole region and makes extensive use of technology to reduce distance between stakeholders. The launch of PACFOLD took place at the Pacific Focal Points meeting in Samoa in September 2014 and included the introduction of the PACFOLD learn online community

PARTNERSHIPS: MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Pacific TVET Open, Distance and Flexible Learning Forum 2013

With Central Gippsland Institute of Technical and Further Education (GippsTAFE), Australia, COL facilitated the Pacific TVET Open, Distance and Flexible Learning Forum in Tonga from 22 to 25 March 2013. The forum was attended by 26 participants from government ministries, NGOs, faith based organisations (FBOs) and TVET institutions in seven Pacific countries: Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Tuvalu. Development partners NZAID and AusAID also attended. The outcome of the forum was a road map for collaboration between TVET institutions in the region and a plan for COL capacity-building support for open, distance and flexible learning approaches. Attending the forum on behalf of Tonga were: **Mr Oto Misi**, Director, Tonga Institute of Science

and Technology, and **Lady Siatukimoana Vaea**, Deputy Director, Post-Secondary Education, Ministry of Education.

Regional Workshop on Teacher Education in the Pacific

COL attended the regional workshop on Teacher Education in the Pacific hosted by the National University of Samoa from 20 to 25 May 2013. The meeting's participants included 21 representatives of teacher education departments in the ministries of education and teacher training institutions from seven countries. Discussed at the meeting were the challenges facing teacher education in the region, and the plans and priorities for 2013–2015. As well, three projects were identified with COL support envisioned:

Project 1: Upgrading Mathematics and Science Teachers

COL will collaborate with teacher training institutions to:

- ▶ design and implement special programmes for the training and upgrading of Science and Math teachers; and
- ▶ organise continuing professional development workshops for Math and Science teachers so as to update the teachers' knowledge and skills.

Project 2: Capacity-Building in ODL

COL will provide technical support to institutions in the region to build their capacity in ODL and in the use of appropriate technology (with COL using expertise available in the region).

Project 3: Provision of support to the Pacific Association of Teacher Educators (PATE)

COL will be asked to consider providing support to PATE so that PATE's objectives can be achieved, in particular those relating to:

- ▶ professional development of teacher educators in the region;
- ▶ research and publications; and
- ▶ support for PATE as a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences on teacher development.

It was agreed that concept notes should be submitted to COL on the three projects before 30 June 2013. It was also agreed that the National University of Samoa should develop and submit the concept note for Project 1; Solomon Islands for Project 2; and **Tonga** for Project 3, on behalf of the participating countries and institutions.

VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting

The VUSSC Interlocutors meet every three years to review developments, achievements and lessons learned. The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting coincides with the Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF). PCF7 was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 2 to 6 December 2013. At this meeting, Interlocutors participated in a half-day impact evaluation workshop with COL's impact

evaluators, Dr Stephen Murgatroyd and Ms Janet Tully. Highlights of the Interlocutors Meeting included a discussion of the post-MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), current VUSSC resources, and the importance of gender in the VUSSC initiative. At the close of the meeting, the following countries expressed interest in offering VUSSC courses: Barbados, Vanuatu, Namibia, St. Lucia, Antigua & Barbuda, Maldives, Grenada and Dominica. **Tonga** was not represented at the meeting.

CAPACITY

Cost and Financing for Open Schools

COL facilitated a regional Cost and Financing (for Open Schooling) workshop in Vanuatu on 19 November 2012. The workshop trained the participants about issues of concern in establishing and maintaining open schooling. Participants from Vanuatu, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and **Tonga** participated in the workshop. **James Lengi** of St. Nicholas Secondary School, **Paul Fonua** of Tailulu College, **Kalafitoni Latu** of Tonga College, **Tuipulotu Finau** of Tonga High School and **Sela Kakala Havea** of the University of the South Pacific (USP) Tonga attended the workshop.

Monitoring and Evaluation for VUSSC

A workshop was organised in Male, Maldives, from 3 to 7 March 2013 specifically for the Asia Pacific region to build the capacity of implementers in designing and implementing the VUSSC M&E framework. It was supported by the Ministry of Education and the Maldives Villa College. **Lady Siatukimoana Vaea**, Deputy Director, Post-Secondary Education, and **Seiosehina Fifita**, Chief Education Officer of the Tonga Institute of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Training, attended the meeting.

Gender Mainstreaming for Open Schools

To ensure that open schools mainstream gender in their activities, COL organised three one-day workshops, starting in March 2014 in **Tonga** to discuss the Guide to Integrating Gender Equity and Equality, developed by a COL consultant.

Flexible Approaches to TVET

In May 2014, COL facilitated a workshop in Fiji for 26 participants from nine Pacific countries, including **Tonga**, to build capacity in flexible approaches to TVET and develop plans for new courses according to country context. As a result, 17 new flexible TVET courses are in development from 12 Pacific TVET institutions or NGOs.

MATERIALS

Legislative Drafting Programme

USP Vanuatu has signed a licence agreement with COL to offer the Professional Diploma in Legislative Drafting (PDL) to students in the Pacific Islands of the Commonwealth.

The course was conducted using a distance learning mode and ran for 30 weeks from April to November 2012. A total of 22 students enrolled in the PDL and COL offered scholarships to **Fitilagi Fa'anunu**, **Silivia V. Atiola** and **V.L. Macomber** of Tonga to study in the programme. Thirteen of 15 candidates at the USP from five Member States, including **Tonga**, successfully completed the legislative drafting programme in 2013. Fifteen candidates from five Member States, including **Tonga**, were sponsored for the 2014 intake. Another fifteen are currently enrolled in the programme and expected to complete by the end of 2015.

New VUSSC Courses

During 2013–2014, 11 VUSSC courses were completed including: Master's in Educational Leadership, Bachelor's in Business and Entrepreneurship, Diploma in Agriculture, Linux for IT Managers, Facilitating Online Instruction, and Sustainable Tourism. Courses are available to all VUSSC member states on the VUSSC website. Approximately 49,000 people have been reached or trained, including senior officials, educators and over 1,300 learners enrolled in VUSSC-developed courses and programmes.

VUSSC Postgraduate Diploma in Education

Senior officials of the small states identified a need to develop a teacher education programme, especially at the postgraduate level, to help address the acute shortage of teachers in most of the small states and the lack of training programmes in most teacher training institutions. COL therefore facilitated a workshop, in collaboration with the National University of Samoa, to develop a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). It ran from 17 June to 3 July 2013 in Samoa. Twenty-eight participants from 14 countries participated in the workshop, with Samoa having the biggest contingent of 15 participants to help with the course writing. Much of the course was developed using OER.

Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades Course

Audio content for the Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course was developed by the Communications Department at National University of Samoa. In September 2014, the course materials were revised to integrate the audio content and the updated course was introduced to stakeholders at the Pacific Focal Points meeting in September 2014. An evaluation study of the 2012 delivery of this course in Nauru was completed in 2014.

MODELS

Transnational Qualifications Framework

A referencing exercise was conducted in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA). As a result, the Pacific Qualifications Framework (PQF) has now been referenced against the TQF. These qualifications will be recognised at both the regional and international levels.

OTHER

Speeches and Presentations

The Vice-President of COL gave a video presentation titled “Education and Training: Building the Critical Platform for Social and Economic Development in the Pacific” at the Pacific TVET Open Distance and Flexible Learning Forum from 25 to 28 March 2013, held in **Tonga**.

LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

COL is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

VISION: To be the foremost global agency that promotes learning for development

MISSION: To help governments and institutions to expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using open, distance and technology-based approaches

CORE STRATEGIES: Partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policies

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