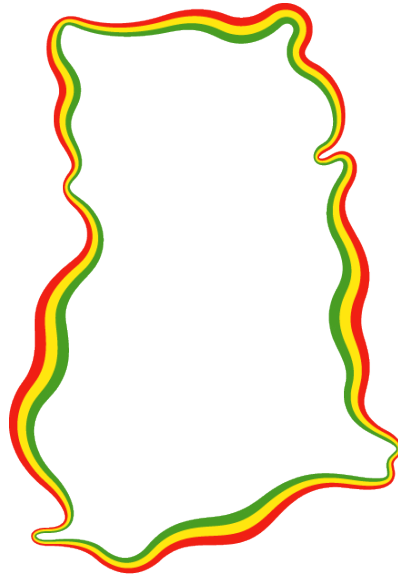




FOCUS ON GHANA

2021-24



COL's work in Ghana is in the areas of higher education, teacher education, lifelong learning for farmers, gender equality, skills for work and benefits from programmes offered by COL's regional centre, the Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning. Learners from Ghana are also participating in COL's free online courses and other openly available resources.

HIGHLIGHTS

- COL's contribution to the online learning platform to train over 5,000 teachers was highlighted by the National Teaching Council (NTC), Ghana, in its report presented at the Ninth Teaching and Learning for Africa Conference held in Accra, Ghana.
- GARU Presbyterian Agricultural Station (GPAS) and COL have improved the lives of more than 30,000 farming households.
- 13,040 learners from Ghana have enrolled in 69,741 courses with 22,091 course completions under the Skills Online programme.

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. We support the governments and institutions in the use of appropriate, affordable technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development. During its current plan (2021-27), 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 currently 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 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; 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 member country. These are:

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

KEY CONTACTS

FOCAL POINT

Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah, OVC

REGIONAL CENTRE

The Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL) is hosted by the National Open University of Nigeria to promote the use of open and distance learning (ODL) and technologies for increasing access to equitable quality education and training in West Africa.

PARTNERS

COL's partners in Ghana include:

- Ministry of Education
- Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training & Entrepreneurial Development
- Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling
- Garu Presbyterian Agriculture Station
- Ghana Library Authority
- Koforidua Technical University
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
- National Teaching Council of Ghana
- Tamale College of Education
- Worldreader

BUILDING NATIONAL RESILIENCE

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

Transforming teacher education

COL has been supporting the National Teaching Council (NTC) of Ghana since 2021 towards creating a digital learning environment. COL partnered with NTC to carry out a needs analysis on teacher capacity in digital learning and provided an instance of the Moodle-based Learning Management System to pilot a scalable model for teacher professional development in Ghana. In June 2022, COL's contribution to the online learning platform to train over 5000 teachers was highlighted by NTC, Ghana, in its report presented at the Ninth Teaching and Learning for Africa Conference held in Accra, Ghana. This forum, co-hosted by the Ghana Ministry of Education, is an annual high-level Pan-African consultative forum convened by the Africa Federation of Teaching and Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA).

A two-day stakeholder engagement workshop was held in January 2022 to discuss the requirements of a points-based Continuous Professional Development (CPD) platform. During the workshop, participants contributed

to the gap assessment for the platform, which will be implemented as part of the Teacher Education and Enhancement Programme (TEEP), supported by COL.

A three-day workshop entitled "National Policy Dialogue Workshop on ODL for Teacher Training," hosted by NTC in November 2023 attracted 46 key stakeholders that included education leaders, college principals, teachers, lecturers, and university representatives. The workshop marked an important milestone in Ghana's educational reforms, highlighting the country's commitment to adopting modern methodologies in teacher training for better educational outcomes. As an outcome of the workshop, a draft national ODL policy for teacher training has been developed and is ready for ministerial-level engagement and other consultations towards adoption by the government.

Digitalisation of teaching and learning

As part of its mandate to transform the educational landscape in Ghana through the use of technology,

the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS) requested COL to support the Complementary Education Agency (CEA) and Ghana TVET Project of the Ministry of Education to digitise their teaching and learning activities. To achieve the digitalisation processes at these two agencies, COL supported CENDLOS to engage two consultants to conduct a needs assessment to understand the digital strategies for teaching, learning, data management, and monitoring and evaluation systems to track programmes

at CEA and Ghana TVET Project. Twenty-six (16M/10F) ministry staff participated in a workshop on Curriculum and Content Development which was held in March 2023. Thirteen senior officials were also sensitised at the CEA through an assessment workshop conducted in May 2023 as a critical step for TVET education.

COL engaged with stakeholders in Ghana to facilitate a national high-level policy dialogue on Open, Distance and e-Learning in June 2022.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

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

COL- Association of Commonwealth Universities collaboration

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) invited COL to participate in the Partnership for Enhanced and Blended Learning (PEBL) project to develop and strengthen quality assurance systems for six universities each in Ghana and Nigeria. The six universities where COL provided support in this project include: Ashesi University, All Nations University, Kumasi Technical University, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS).

COL is supporting the University of Ghana in strengthening its ODL capacities. Fifteen staff members (8M/7F) of the University of Ghana received training in ODL course development with COL support in November 2023. An ODL policy was developed at the University of Ghana with COL's support in 2024.

COL facilitated a stakeholders' engagement workshop for the development of institutional ODL policy at the University of Environment and Sustainable Development (UESD), Ghana, in May 2024, with 30 (20M/10F) staff members. UESD finalised an ODL policy in July 2024 with COL's support.

Outreach for out-of-school students in a rural community

The Franciscan Capuchin Friars in Ghana were supported to establish a schooling outreach for out-of-school youths in a rural community at the request of the local Ministry district office. After several discussions between the

Franciscan Capuchin Friars, Ghana and their advisors in the USA and Australia, a curriculum and teaching model was agreed upon and content development was initiated. COL supplied 20 AptusPi devices, which is a low-cost device designed and developed by COL that allows educators and learners to connect to digital learning platforms and content without the need for grid electricity or Internet access. Following an orientation to the use of the AptusPi in November 2021, a community event was held to inaugurate the La Sapienza School for Out-of-the-School Children. Resources developed through the first year of the La Sapienza Open Schooling initiative were shared in a public meeting with Ministry officials for wider use by teachers and learners in the district.

School-based Teacher Development

A total of 380 teachers from 32 schools in Northern Ghana formed professional learning communities where they were mentored and coached by staff from

Tamale College of Education (TACE) in learner-centred pedagogies, including problem-based learning. Training resources were adapted from COL's School-Based Teacher Development (SBTD) toolkit. The teachers reached a total of 10,071 students.

Ninety five teachers in Ghana signed up for a COL MOOC on inclusive teaching and learning and cybersecurity training for teachers in November 2022.

COL is now supporting the TACE to develop a full ODL programme for in-service teachers. Activities to date include:

- a workshop on ODL and TEL was held in May 2023, which provided a platform to raise awareness and share insights on the institutional needs for the effective implementation of ODL. A total of 40 participants attended the training.
- a five-day stakeholder engagement workshop for 20 participants (14M/6F) held in June 2023 on the development of the “Framework for Open, Distance and Technology-Enabled Learning”.
- a four-day course development workshop on ODL for 40 staff held that covered the principles and frameworks of ODL course design, along with

integrating TEL into course development. TACE, in collaboration with COL, is leveraging the skills and insights gained from the workshop to create 12 courses for the ODL programme for in-service teachers, marking a significant step forward in teacher training and professional development in the country.

Strengthening TVET through digital pathways

COL is supporting the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training & Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED) in strengthening TVET training through the design and development of a digital course for Diploma in Construction Technology. Three workshops were conducted to ensure the subject experts and support team have the capacity to develop courseware for 23 units of the building construction course. Staff members (5M) were trained on the provision of technical support and quality assurance; seven TVET IT support team staff (all male) and two quality assurance team (all male) were trained in Moodle, and 11 (10M/1F) TVET subject matter experts were trained in courseware design. Gender-responsive strategies for ODL in TVET have been approved and are being implemented at AAMUSTED.

REGIONAL CENTRE: RETRIDOL

Since July 2021, monthly webinars hosted by RETRIDOL have attracted over 2,700 participants, most of whom were from Commonwealth Sub-Saharan African countries.

RETRIDOL facilitated a TEL workshop in mid-2022 for dual and single ODeL institutions in Ghana, with 27 participants in attendance.

In April 2024, RETRIDOL hosted an ODL policy workshop, in which Ghana was represented.

In May 2024, RETRIDOL hosted a regional workshop for the employability framework. Institution staff from Ghana were represented.

IMPROVING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

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

Following a community event that was held to inaugurate the La Sapienza School for Out-of-the-School Children in November 2021, classes started with 26 learners in three villages with demand from communities to increase enrolment.

Partnering with the NTC, under TEEP, a series of courses were offered to teachers and teacher educators. These courses include: Mobile Learning with Multimedia, Cybersecurity Training for Teachers, Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Creating an Inclusive School, Teaching in a Digital Age, Advanced Cybersecurity Training for Teachers, ICT in Leadership and Management and Advanced Mobile Learning with Multimedia. A total of 46,609 (15,288F/31,321) participants have been trained in Ghana using COL's OER resources.

Under the Parental Learning for Uninterrupted Schooling (PLUS) framework, COL supported partners to empower parents and facilitate teacher-parent collaboration to improve learning outcomes among children, especially in marginalised communities. A series of community mobilisation and sensitisation meetings were held separately in each school community in the Nanton and Kumbungu districts in the northern part of Ghana in November 2021. These meetings aimed at increasing understanding and acceptance among key stakeholders for parental involvement in children's learning. A total of about 4,570 persons participated (1,432F/3,138M), including Ghana Education Service officers, teachers, representatives of Chiefs, and district assembly representatives. Forty community volunteers were further selected in February 2022 for training and to facilitate the process of community parental mobilisation for the formation of parental learning cycles/groups, ensuring effective collaborations between communities and supporting parents and teachers for using techniques such as group tasks, simulation, reflective sessions and Q&A.

With the support of the School for Life project team, 43 participants from Ghana successfully completed the Family and Intergenerational Literacy and Learning Course.

Supporting livelihoods of farmers

COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) model is based on a holistic approach that builds the capacity of farming

communities, especially women, through the use of open and distance learning (ODL) and appropriate technologies where communities learn in their own languages and where learning becomes collateral for credit. COL's L3F initiative partner, GPAS operates in Garu, Tempene, Pusiga, Binduri and Bawku West Districts, along with the Bawku Municipality and is focused on improving the livelihoods of sorghum farmers. COL's support of GPAS has resulted in the following outcomes:

- 15,440 (9,665M/5,775F) farmers were linked to financial Institutions to access savings and credit services; 14,573 farmers are producing and selling high-quality sorghum to Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited (GGBL) through Faranaya Agribusiness Centre (FABC) and Farmers linked to other value chain service.
- 12,239 farmers are accessing credit through village savings and loan associations.
- 86% of the 22,000 farmers (15,000 existing and 7,000 new) received the voice SMS on sorghum production.
- 15 field enumerators engaged to sensitise and register new farmers. A total of 9,967 farmers were reached and registered to undertake the Lifelong Learning course.
- GPAS disseminated the Lifelong Learning course to 5,925 farmers through the m-learning platform as well as other ICT-based methods.
- 5,035 farmers in Ghana are registered for Sorghum harvest and post-harvest management training.

The L3F approach has been scaled up to cover more areas in Northern Ghana including the Bunkpurugu-Nakapanduri and Yonyoo-Nasuam Districts of the Northern Region. In turn, this will potentially reach even more farming households bringing with it the benefits of increases in yields, market access and income.

GPAS developed three courses for farmers on sorghum production, financial literacy and marketing, and livestock production and translated them from English to Kusaal. Since July 2021, COL's partnership with Coursera, Udemy and Grow with Google has reached 13,040 learners from Ghana, who have enrolled in 69,741 courses with 22,091 course completions under the Skills Online programme.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Sefakor Adabunu from Koforidua Technical University was invited 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. Ten delegates from Ghana 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. Other delegates included Hayfron Aboagye, Price Waterhouse Coopers (Ghana) Ltd; Akwasi Solomon Addae-Boahene, T-TEL; Christian Addai-Poku, National Teaching Council; Nana Gyamfi Adwabour, CENDLOS; Emmanuel Akwei Musahamat, Farms Ltd; Mohammed Naziiru Aryee, Samuel Nuamah Boakye, National Teaching Council; Smile Dzisi, Data Link Institute of Business and Technology; Asunka Obed Abunkudugu, Garu Presbyterian Agricultural Station; Lawrence Sarpong, National Teaching Council.

COL’s Regional Focal Points Meeting for Africa and Europe was held in Seychelles from 20–21 February 2023. Official representatives from 19 Commonwealth countries in the region participated in the two-day meeting. Mr Joshua Mallet represented COL’s focal point for Ghana.

COL, in partnership with the National Institute of Open Schooling, India organised an international workshop in June 2023 with a focus on the adoption of the gender-green teacher (GGT) programme. The workshop attracted 49 principals and senior professors from Africa (The Gambia, Ghana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Uganda) and Asia (Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka). As part of the workshop, each participating institution developed an action plan to implement the GGT programme in their respective countries, ensuring that the acquired knowledge and skills translate into practical teaching strategies.

COL, in collaboration with the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL), conducted a workshop to validate the competency framework and standard for a blended vocational trainer, developing learning outcomes for COL’s exemplar course for a blended TVET trainer and benchmarking for the establishment and operationalisation of ODeL centres. The workshop was attended by 11 (6M/5F) key trainers from various African institutions, including AAMUSTED.

PUBLICATIONS OF RELEVANCE

Gender Profile 2023: Ghana <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5524>

Practical Guide for WITED Chapters and Individual Champions for Increasing Girls’ and Women’s Participation in STEM-TVET (Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, The Gambia) <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/4001>

Report on the Regional Focal Points Meeting - Africa and Europe <http://hdl.handle.net/11599/5316>



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