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Regional Focal Points Meeting – Caribbean

Kingston Jamaica | 30-31 January 2023

Theme: Learning for Sustainable Development

Overview

Caribbean COL Focal Points met with the COL President and staff in Kingston Jamaica from 30-31 January 2023. This meeting was the second in the series of four planned consultative regional meetings for 2022-2023, and was designed to capture stakeholder needs, inform COL’s planning, strengthen the focal point network and deepen COL’s engagement in the region.

Ten Caribbean countries were represented: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines participated in-person while Trinidad and Tobago participated virtually. The CEO from the Jamaica Teaching Council was also present for many of the sessions as an observer. The meeting set out to update Focal Points on COL’s work in the region and wider Commonwealth, to consult with them on regional and national priorities and to discuss the role of education in promoting a green learning agenda.
Overall, it was a very successful meeting, marked by in-depth engagement and lively dialogue that served to consolidate COL’s relationship with Caribbean member states and their commitment to COL’s work. Many of the regional and national priorities identified by the Focal Points reflect those in COL’s Strategic Plan 2021-2027. Areas of focus included inclusivity, boys’ education, TVET education, professional training for teachers and food security.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the two-day Regional Focal Points Meeting were to:

1. Share the key elements of the COL Strategic Plan 2021-2027 and discuss how the outcomes and impact will be evaluated.
2. Identify three to five national priorities in education and skills development and discuss how COL can address these.
3. Share a report on COL activities in each country.
4. Raise awareness about the benefits of open educational resources (OER)
5. Discuss the key elements of a green learning agenda and the role of the education sector.
6. Highlight the role of Focal Points and how COL can strengthen the network.

**Expected Outcomes**

Expected outcomes included:

1. Identification of specific national and regional priorities that can be implemented within the context of COL’s Strategic Plan 2021-2027. This includes an action plan for adopting OER and a green learning agenda.
2. Concrete collaborations between different stakeholders established.
3. Focal Point network strengthened.
Day 1 - January 30, 2023

Welcome and Opening Session

Presenter: Professor Asha Kanwar, President and CEO, COL

The opening ceremony of the Focal Points Meeting of the Caribbean took place at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Kingston Jamaica. In attendance were three COL representatives, nine Focal Points, Jamaica’s Minister of Education, two senior members of the Ministry, an observer from the Jamaica Teaching Council and approximately 14 other specially invited guests. A list of participants is available at Annex 1.

Professor Asha Kanwar, President and CEO of COL, welcomed all participants, thanked Jamaica for agreeing to host the meeting and expressed gratitude to the Focal Point, Dr Phylicia Marshall, for her support. She noted that, following the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic, COL was happy to resume once again regular in-person Focal Points meetings.

Professor Kanwar began her presentation with an overview of COL’s mission, programme sectors and key stakeholders. She reminded the meeting that as an inter-governmental organisation charged with promoting learning for sustainable development, COL’s focus was on learning that leads to opportunities for economic empowerment, social inclusion and environmental conservation. She explained that through leveraging new and existing technologies, COL had increased access to learning, especially for marginalized groups, reaching larger numbers of learners at lower costs.

Drawing on data and examples of success from across the Commonwealth, the President outlined four paradigm shifts that have continued to guide COL’s work in meeting countries’ needs. These were:

1. If the child cannot go to school, the school comes to the child.
   The cost of open schooling in India as compared to Kendriya Vidyalaya (Central School) is significantly lower: 1:12. Similarly in Namibia, it is approximately 1:4 for NAMCOL in comparison to formal secondary school.
2. Technology-enabled learning can break open the ‘ivory towers’ of tertiary education. With an increase in the number of open universities to 33.4 million students from across the Commonwealth now have access to tertiary education.
3. Open Educational Resources (OER) are the answer to closed and costly textbooks. Studies have shown that OER have assisted students in Malaysia and Bangladesh who, because of prohibitive costs, had limited or no access to textbooks.
4. The digital divide can be transformed into a digital dividend. Learners in remote areas from over a dozen Commonwealth countries, including Antigua and Barbuda and Bahamas in the Caribbean, have benefitted from the Aptus Pi developed by COL. Professor Kanwar closed her address by sharing highlights from the two-day Focal Points Meeting-Asia held in December 2022.

**Guest**: The Honourable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education and Youth, Jamaica

The Honourable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education and Youth in Jamaica, was the guest speaker at the opening ceremony. The Minister welcomed the participants to Jamaica and encouraged them to find time to see the capital city of Kingston.

She thanked COL for meaningful and productive collaboration in the past few years, and especially in the years since she had become Minister for Education and Youth. Minister Williams remarked that Jamaica had benefited from the collaboration with COL through a number of projects, including training workshops, aimed at promoting a harmonized approach to the development of online and distance education and strengthening the capacity of tertiary institutions in the development, interpretation and application of standards for quality assurance.

She affirmed that education plays a vital role in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. From there she asked others to work together with COL leveraging resources afforded to each country, including new and existing technologies which will assist in dismantling many of the barriers that students, educators and administrators alike face on a daily basis. She opined that a paradigm shift is required throughout the education sector, which calls for flexibility and innovation in teaching methodologies and the use of information communication technology to fill gaps and find solutions to issues such as teacher-pupil ratio, addressing the need for individualised learning and costs of textbooks and other classroom items.

She emphasized that concepts of e-learning, integrating current technologies, personalised learning and project learning are pertinent in navigating this new era, adding that they can assist in making education more accessible for all. She also added that concepts like the open school concept will see COL taking the learning to all, whenever it is needed.

She further noted that the concept of “Learning for Sustainable Development” must be considered and interpreted in the context of greater opportunities for migration, urbanisation and increasing social and cultural diversity that are reshaping countries and communities. The Minister went on to enumerate some
of the things her Ministry had accomplished since she assumed office as Education Minister. She informed the participants that the Ministry of Education and Youth in Jamaica is committed to providing full support for the expansion of technical and vocational education, as well as STEM/STEAM Education in Jamaican schools as imperatives to developing the skills needed to support sustainable development. She paid particular tribute to COL for helping address the historical and cultural factors that have impacted Jamaican students’ learning opportunities and for also supporting the work with the Jamaica Teaching Council to establish a mentorship programme for boys for the purpose of steering them towards entrepreneurship.

She added that because of Covid-19 the Ministry had embarked on a project of empowering students, noting that about 40,000 Jamaican students have received learning devices from the Government. She shared that her Ministry has also addressed the challenge of low Internet connectivity in schools by connecting about half of the existing 1000-plus Schools in Jamaica. She further added that the rest of the schools will be connected shortly.

The Minister concluded her speech by thanking COL for its role as a partner assisting the efforts of members of the Commonwealth to achieve sustainable development and the enhancement of human resources.

The opening session closed with a word of thanks from Dr Phylicia Marshall, COL Focal Point for Jamaica, and the playing of the COL Song, Sing as One, after which all participants gathered for breakfast.

**SESSION 1: Introduction of Participants and Sharing of Expectations**

**Facilitator:** Professor Wale Adekunle

Following breakfast, the meeting proceeded as per the programme attached as Annex 2. The meeting was unique in that about 80% of the participants were new to the group and were attending the meeting for the first time. In a sense, we were all strangers in the hall, and this had its advantages and disadvantages. The key advantage was, as Carlos Zafon had said in The Shadow of the Wind: “…sometimes one feels freer speaking to a stranger than to people one knows.”
In this kind of setting, it was important to start the meeting by focusing on the people and their expectations. Thus, after a short introduction of the COL team, the focus shifted to the FP participants. As an icebreaker, the participants were asked to pair up, interact for a few minutes and present one another to the plenary.

With this completed, the participants were quickly moved to the reflection on their expectations. They were then asked to share their “Expectations from the Meeting” and “Fears about the Meeting.” They were instructed to share their greatest expectations on blue cards and their greatest fears on red cards. After that had been done, the cards were retrieved from the participants and two volunteers were invited to help summarize the expectations and fears from all the participants and group them. One of the volunteers was asked to read out the paper and the other placed the papers on the board. Many of the papers carried similar ideas and after asking the group, the volunteer was guided on the placement of each card. In all there were four groups of expectations. These were as follows:

1. More information about the working of COL will be shared.
2. Sensitization about technologies for communications will be made (Chat GPT)
3. Identification of priority areas in education
4. Role of COL Focal Point Persons will be discussed.

Following the same procedure, the fears were also grouped into three categories. The summarized fears were as follows:

1. Time management may not be optimal, and meeting may not address all issues.
2. Follow-up to the meeting may not be timely.
3. There may not be enough action following the meeting.

With these summaries displayed on the Board, participants were led through the Objectives, Expected Outcomes, and Programme for the two-day meeting. These were also projected, and participants were asked to discuss how the expressed expectations had been captured by the prepared programme. In the end, all the expressed expectations were seen to have been well captured by the programme prepared for the meeting. Thereafter, the fears were also reviewed and participants were challenged to make sure the expressed fears did not happen. After this participatory session, the participants were ready for the workshop and the climate set for the main presentations.
SESSION 2: COVID-19: Shaping Education for the Future

Facilitator: Professor Asha Kanwar

Professor Asha Kanwar made the presentation on Covid-19: Shaping Education for the future. She laid the context for the presentation by looking at the impact of Covid-19 on institutions across the world, mentioning the drop in international students, citing many cases including the case of Austria where the applications for student visas dropped by 80-90%. She also talked about the global transition to emergency remote teaching, the lack of technology infrastructure, the negative consequences of Covid-19 on research and the drop in revenues from fees and budget cuts. Consolidating on the context, she observed the effects from two different perspectives.

She looked at the perspective of the teachers who had to live-stream lectures synchronously (74.6%), those whose presentations were sent to students (44.5%), those who made asynchronous pre-recorded video lectures and made such available online (32.1%), and those who made asynchronous pre-recorded audios (20.6%). She also looked at the perspective of students who had heavy workloads and those who felt that their performance had declined (50%), those with inequitable access to tools including the internet and those whose psychological and emotional wellbeing were affected. She went further by referring to the survey of higher education where 15 institutions of higher learning were involved in the survey including 11 universities and four colleges. Referring to the survey, she said 81% of the students interviewed were learning online with 68% rating their online learning experience as “best imaginable”, “excellent” or “good.” She further added that in the survey, 62% also highly rated the support they received for online learning. She informed the group that there were about 28 open universities in the Commonwealth, serving about 3.5 million students spread over approximately 3,000 programmes and about 25,000 courses. Professor Kanwar concluded the context she was setting by providing emerging trends in the world of education.

She then presented five solid points to show the emerging trends. These included the blurring of boundaries between face-to-face and distance learning, increasing use of technologies and online learning, increasing issues related to mental health and wellbeing, increased focus on regulatory mechanisms for distance and online learning and increased use of micro-credentials for employment. She ended the context by presenting what she called ‘Shared Challenges During Covid-19’. She said that shared challenges during Covid-19 include the costs, connectivity, content and capacity.

After setting the robust context, she talked about the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic. She shared three lessons: the first was that digital technologies are here to stay, as digital connectivity continues to increase. She pointed out that digital connectivity has increased so dramatically that by the
year 2022, about 5.3 billion people will become Internet users worldwide. She referred to a survey of educational administrators which indicated a change in perception about OER compared with commercial publishers. She reported that whereas 44% were more optimistic about OERs, only 18% were more optimistic about Commercial Publishers. Correspondingly, she also reported a reduction in the percentage of surveyed administrators who were more pessimistic about OER (3%) relative to 7% for commercial publishers.

Both increases in digitalization and Internet access during the pandemic, coupled with the increase in the use and acceptance of OER, pose various challenges on teachers. Ranking high among the assistance that teachers required include those related to the organization of webinars for students, how to support remote students, how to have greater access to digital materials and how to work and teach from home. She also indicated that teachers need assistance in online resource hubs and with technology and they need advice on accessibility requirements.

The second lesson she drew from the pandemic was that growing inequalities need urgent attention. She pointed out that the vulnerable became even more vulnerable, stressing a general learning loss of about 3% with learners from less educated homes being more vulnerable (55%). She indicated that children with disabilities were even more affected, spending very little time on formal education. Among this group, 31% were reported not to be studying at all with 45% spending less than an hour studying. Only 24% were reported to be spending more than an hour studying at home.

The third lesson was the phenomenal growth experienced in self-directed learning. She reported the mushrooming of a range of new online courses started by various universities, with a corresponding increase in the adoption of online courses and an increased acceptability of online training for professional development. For example, Coursera course subscribers rose from eight million in 2019 to 31 million in 2021. Similar increases were recorded by other players like EDX and Future Learn. Smaller players like Class Central also experienced an explosion in the number of subscribers from 350,000 in 2019 to 800,000 in 2021, for a total of 2.3 million.

Commenting on the proliferation of MOOCs, as another example, she pointed to a number of MOOC limitations. These include poor completion rates, learners not returning after one year, MOOCs only reaching those who already have a degree and many of the MOOCs not being available as OERs. She looked at MOOC for Development and opined that the Food and Agriculture sector is underserved leading to the development of agMOOCs which is a consortium conceptualized by COL and supported by NPTEL.

She went on to draw lessons from the experiences of COL, expressing a necessity for the adoption of a targeted approach to addressing inequality, providing support to teachers and students psychologically, designing innovative approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment, harnessing the power of appropriate technology and collaboration rather than competition.
In the last part of her presentation, she drew the picture of what education would look like in the future. She started this part of her talk by informing the group about the UN Transforming Education Summit indicating that the summit will address learning loss, promote equity and inclusion, achieve digital transformation, review curricula and pedagogies and support psycho-social well-being. She also mentioned the trends in technology and practices to include artificial intelligence, micro-credentialing, blended and hybrid courses models, learning analytics, open -educational resources, and quality online learning. She provided four “take homes” about the future of education. The first was that the future of education is blended. She presented a future where appropriate technologies will be used to create blended learning opportunities, with multiple pathways introduced to acquire qualifications, and technologies used to personalize learning. The second “take home” was a future where nobody would be left behind as far as education was concerned. The third “take home” was that promotion of lifelong learning was key. This included learning to learn online, creating an ecosystem for lifelong learning and providing just-in-time onsite training. The fourth “take home” was the focus on employability. This included a balance between theory and practice including attention to hard and soft skills, engaging the industry for example, in terms of internships and apprenticeships, linking quality assurance to employability, provision of career support and measuring capability rather than a number of hours. All of these were to demonstrate a shift in paradigm from credit hours to the range of skills acquired. She provided an employability pathway starting from the time before admission, covering the period after induction and getting to the penultimate year and ending with the period of graduation. She suggested specific milestones from sensitization about the career, to career counselling, evaluation drills and ending with career support at graduation. Concluding her talk on education for the future, she emphasized three things: a quality education that is both affordable and accessible for all, education that uses blended learning options according to the context and education that models sustainable behaviours for the people and the planet.

The presentation was very well received by participants, and there were many complimentary comments from the group. Some participants particularly thanked COL for coming to their rescue during the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown periods. Some participants raised the question of connectivity which is still relatively low in certain countries. More questions were raised on the future of education and how counties especially the small Islands could get themselves ready for the future. It was concluded that working in collaboration rather than in competition was crucial.

**SESSION 3: The Role of the Focal Points**

**Facilitator:** Dr Mairette Newman

Given that all but four of the Focal Points were new, this session was designed to familiarize participants with COL, its structure, organisation and work, highlight key facts about COL, outline expectations and explain the roles they perform for COL and for their respective country as Focal Points. The session opened with a fun activity -- a series of quiz questions that sought to elicit the participants’ knowledge of COL. The responses formed the basis for discussion and additional questions. The new Focal Points were
not familiar with COL’s resources and found the quiz answers particularly helpful for acquainting them, with basic facts and guiding them as to how they could access further information.

The second part of the session focused on the key roles of the Focal Point. Following discussion in groups, participants reconvened in a plenary and identified tasks and duties that the Focal Point is required to perform. These included:

- Sharing up-to-date information with COL about national ODL needs and priorities
- Informing COL of regional plans and frameworks and other development partner activities;
- Flagging areas where new initiatives and interventions could be considered;
- Providing advice and guidance to COL
- Disseminating information about COL within the country;
- Advocating for ODL, OER, COL
- Raise awareness among institutions, organisations and Ministries regarding COL assistance or support;
- Briefing Ministers and other senior officials on COL issues;
- Assisting in securing country contributions to COL; and
- Meeting and arranging in-country visits for COL staff.

Chief among the challenges identified were matters related to information flow. For example, Focal Points were not always notified about COL activities in country. They also recognized that because COL works in non-formal education and training they were sometimes asked to engage with Ministries other than Education and this could be challenging. Finally, they mentioned that they often have to perform similar roles with other partners – for example UNESCO – which increased the workload.

The session closed with a short presentation on what COL does to support Focal Points and help them to be effective. The facilitator reminded the group that COL:

- Shares Country Reports;
- Provide information on COL;
- Publishes the list of FPs on COL website;
- Informs FPs of COL staff activities and visits in-country;
- Facilitates triennial meetings; and
- Administers a Caribbean Focal Point WhatsApp group.
SESSION 4: Country Reports

Facilitator: Dr Mairette Newman

In preparation for the Regional Meeting, each Focal Point was provided with a template and asked to report on priority areas for education in their country and to respond to a series of questions on other educational matters. Seven countries of the ten countries who were represented submitted reports and the findings were consolidated and presented in the session.

Generally, the consolidated findings confirmed alignment between COL’s programmes and national and regional priorities and, not surprisingly, a number of commonalities were identified across countries. The table below presents a snapshot of each country’s priority areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</th>
<th>The Bahamas</th>
<th>Barbados</th>
<th>Grenada</th>
<th>Guyana</th>
<th>St Lucia</th>
<th>SVG</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L3F</td>
<td>Farming as a Business Crop production; Tech Skills</td>
<td>Establishing Institute for Agriculture</td>
<td>Courses in Agriculture and Fisheries</td>
<td>Farming as a Business; Food Safety; Value added to primary commodities</td>
<td>Food Security Training; Agro-processing training</td>
<td>Hydroponics; Food Preservation &amp; Packaging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Males in HE</td>
<td>Multicultural and gender responsive curriculum Resources to meeting the needs boys</td>
<td>Reduce disparity between male and female performance in education &amp; training</td>
<td>Boys’ Under-performance</td>
<td>Removing gender stereotypes in the curriculum; Closing the performance gap between boys and girls</td>
<td>Pedagogies suitable for male students; Caribbean identity and cultural awareness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Sec Ed</td>
<td>Increase enrolment post-pandemic; Programmes to meet national and industry needs; Equal access to TVET</td>
<td>Redesign curriculum at TAMCC; Promotion of LLL; Adult literacy and numeracy</td>
<td>Defining &amp; strengthening pathways for advancing through the system</td>
<td>Training for facilitators in online teaching and learning; Employability and entrepreneurs hip skills development</td>
<td>Support for online and blended delivery; Strengthening the policy framework for ODL (In progress)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</td>
<td>The Bahamas</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<td>Sec Ed</td>
<td>Robotic and artificial intelligence programme in schools</td>
<td>Virtual School</td>
<td>Mental health and wellness</td>
<td>Access to OER aligned with national curriculum</td>
<td>Improved capacity in blended learning design delivery and assessment</td>
<td>Universal Sec Ed Open Schooling</td>
<td>Creation of digital content Strategies for teaching adolescent boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Ed</td>
<td>Training for teacher educators</td>
<td>Develop standards for teacher educators etc Post-graduate opportunities for teachers TVET teacher training Training for teachers of blind and deaf</td>
<td>Digital Pedagogies Evaluations of Blended Learning</td>
<td>Upskill/mediate teachers in digital literacy and technology integration for pedagogical purposes</td>
<td>Transformatio of the CPCE to facilitate online delivery of teacher training. Attainment of 100% of teachers trained by 2024</td>
<td>Mathematics Education and Technology in Education Basic principles of research</td>
<td>Virtual classroom Utilizing online libraries/digital textbooks. Technical drawing Inclusive Education Education for resilience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills TVET</td>
<td>Training and certification for persons who have the skill set. Assessor &amp; Verifier training</td>
<td>National policy framework to drive TVET Strategies to increase participation in TVET</td>
<td>Capacity Building for TVET Practitioners</td>
<td>TVET skills for employment and entrepreneurship Access to TVET in primary schools</td>
<td>Expand curriculum and training to meet national needs Re-tooling and resourcing institutions especially in hinterland</td>
<td>Expand access and participation Increase initial and continuous training for TVET practitioners</td>
<td>Training in Assessment and quality assurance. Working with vulnerable groups Industry and labour market training. Technical Drawing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Participants remarked on these commonalities and suggested that their countries would benefit from closer collaboration to address these areas. It was agreed that this idea would be explored further in Session 10 devoted to action plans scheduled for the following day.

The template also asked Focal Points to provide information on six other related areas: the status of ODL and technology infrastructure, actions taken to address the impact of Covid-19: support provided for persons with disability; how teacher education was being strengthened; efforts to review curricula; and initiatives focused on green learning. In summary, the reports indicated that:

• Despite variability with respect to connectivity, bandwidth and learners’ access to devices, all countries had and were continuing to engage and strengthen distance education;
• Responses to the pandemic varied; however, adoption of OER, psycho-social interventions and attention to vulnerable leaners and those with special needs were among the most prevalent;
• All countries reported increased attention to training and professional development for teachers so they can work in a blended modality but requested continuing support in this area; and
• With the exception of Barbados and Guyana, environmental education, climate change education, green learning and the blue economy did not feature in the reports. However, from discussions during this and other sessions in the meeting it was recognized that these areas would be on the agenda for several ministries going forward.

SESSION 5: Monitoring and Evaluation for Results

Facilitator: Professor Wale Adekunle

The presentation on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) started with a description of the terminologies and went on to discuss the Programme Development Cycle and the Theory of Change. It ended with a discussion of how to mainstream gender into M&E.

Monitoring was described as an oversight of the activity's implementation stage with the purpose of determining if the outputs, deliveries and schedules planned have been reached so that action can be taken to correct the deficiencies as quickly as possible. It was described as a continuous assessment that aims at providing all stakeholders with early detailed information on the progress or delay of the ongoing assessed activities.

On the other hand, evaluation was described as the process that provides recommendations and lessons to the project managers and implementation teams that have worked on the projects, and for the ones that will implement and work on similar projects.
While monitoring focuses on if the project is working as intended, evaluation focusses on if the project is yielding the desired effect.

It was established that effective monitoring and evaluation complements good planning, enhancing the effectiveness of development programmes and projects. Good planning helps focus on the results that matter, while monitoring and evaluation provide important pieces of information that can help us learn from past successes and challenges and inform decision-making, so that current and future initiatives are better focused to improve people's lives.

The description of the concept was summarized with the focus on the importance of M&E. It was emphasized that M&E helps to gauge the outcomes and impact of the work, demonstrates whether the objectives have been achieved, and helps to understand what works and what doesn’t, thereby contributing to decision-making about the design and implementation of the intervention. It was further stated that M&E motivates stakeholders and staff and ensures accountability to key stakeholders. Furthermore, it was stated that M&E influences policy, provides opportunity to share key take-away and best practices with other communities and organisations and also contributes to the body of evidence about what works and what does not work.

In conclusion, the presenter went on to discuss the Theory of Change. He described it as a purposeful model of how an initiative—such as a policy, a strategy, a programme, or a project—contributes through a chain of early and intermediate outcomes to the intended result.

Project implementation is actually an implementation of a set of activities leading to desired predicted outcomes. The presenter discussed the transition from Activities to Impact. He commenced by giving the example of the growing of corn as a project. This is presumably what all participants are familiar with. He demonstrated that growing corn as a project requires some inputs like seeds, fertilizer, tractorisation and others. He added that these inputs when applied lead to the yield of corn which is the output. He went on to show that the corn yield has to be sold to become income for the farmer. The income was described as the outcome of the project. He concluded by saying that over a period of time, the farmer will accumulate money to build houses, seek better health for his family, and educate his children among others while describing all these as indices of impact. After this background, he shifted to the discussion of how activities under COL supported projects translate into impacts. He described activities as what COL does directly or through its partners, and human resources necessary for the delivery of set activities. He described Output as the short-term results necessary to achieve the stated outcomes. He added that these
are the measurable and tangible changes that result directly from programme activities and the expenditure of related resources. He described the outcome as the intermediate-term results necessary to achieve the impact typically over a two to three-year period. Added that these are what are sometimes known as intermediate results. He gave impact as the Long-term results expected from an intervention or programme over a five to seven-year period. He also used the “If and then approach” to causality to further demonstrate how inputs translate into impacts through the movement from planned activities to the intended result.

He concluded the discussion of the theory of change by discussing the Logic Model to describe the movement from inputs to results using the Open School Logic Model as the life example. This led to a detailed discussion of how we link outputs from activities in projects to short-term outcomes, long-term outcomes and impacts.

The last part of the presentation was on how to mainstream gender into M&E. He started this part of the presentation by stressing the importance of gender considerations in M&E. He stated that constraints, priorities and impact should be gendered to avoid the risk of drawing conclusions that may exacerbate existing inequalities. He stressed the need for gender equity in the allocation of resources at the input level; the integration of gender in the implementation of activities; the disaggregation of benefits on gender basis at the short-term outcome level; the measurement of how activities have closed the gender gap at the long-term outcome level; and the disaggregation of the empowerment and overall wellbeing at the impact level.

He went on to suggest questions to be asked at each stage of the project cycle in order to effectively mainstream gender into the M&E process. These were as follows:

1. **Project Design Stage**
   a. Are the goals and objectives gender sensitive?
   b. Are we using proportionate inputs from men and women or taking proportionate inputs from each?
   c. Does the baseline incorporate gender analysis?
   d. Do the activities reflect gender sensitivity?

2. **Project Implementation Stage**
   a. Are women involved in activities?
   b. Are gender and sex-aggregated data being collected?
   c. Are women accessing services?
   d. How do they compare with the baseline data?
   e. Is M&E data being used to adjust project implementation?
   f. Are we analysing the data with gender lenses?
   g. Are findings being disseminated?
   h. Are there references to gender in the reports?
3. Project Evaluation Stage
   a. Were there differences in access? Why?
   b. Were there differences in impact? Why?
   c. How can differentials be addressed?
   d. How do results compare to targets?
   e. How did beneficiaries respond?
   f. Are results sustainable?

The presentation on M&E was concluded with a discussion of some gender mainstreaming strategies and tools. He emphasized that gender mainstreaming occurs through an increase in awareness and skills in gender issues; by involving both men and women in the consultation process; by planning for, collecting, analysing, and disseminating sex and gender disaggregated data; by striving for gender balance in the ratios of staff and experts being used; and by enabling men and women to participate and benefit without bias.

As expected, gender issues are topical issues in the Caribbean where the focus is not on women, but on men from among whom underperformance has been reported. Even the composition of the membership of the group buttresses this fact where 70% are women. The presentation was very well received and considered to be timely and relevant. There were technical questions based on the cost of monitoring and evaluation. Participants wanted to know how M&E in COL projects is funded. They seemed to be pleased to hear that the cost of M&E is embedded in the project cost. Capacity building and micro-certification was encouraged as a response to the question on the lack of experts. The question on the general dearth of expertise in the area demands that each initiative must provide some assistance in capacity-building of partners not only in the Caribbean, but around the world.

Discussions easily moved into issues that promote gender imbalance in the Caribbean with an emphasis on how the classrooms have been ‘feminized,’ a situation that some claim is discouraging male students from staying in school. It was suggested that this aspect and other possible predisposing conditions should be further integrated by different initiatives working in the Caribbean.

**SESSION 6: COL Activities in the Region**

**Facilitator:** Dr Mairette Newman

The final session of the day was facilitated by Dr Mairette Newman. The session summarised COL activities in the region from January 2020 to December 2022 and invited participants to comment on areas where COL has had maximum impact and to suggest what else could be done. This session formed the basis for the session on ‘Developing Concrete Action Plans’ scheduled for the following day.

The session began by highlighting the support COL has provided to a variety of Ministries, institutions and agencies across the region through its education sector initiatives. To address the challenge of youth
who fall into the category of not being engaged in education or training nor employed (NEETs), Open Schooling has worked with Belize and Trinidad and Tobago to develop curriculum-based OER; it has also assisted the Adult Education Association in Guyana to reach more learners by adding online and blended options to their programme offerings. COL’s Teacher Education initiative, together with the Joint Board of Teacher Education in Jamaica, is supporting differentiated instruction targeting 2,000 learners in 35 schools. VUSSC has supported institutions and Ministry agencies in the Bahamas, Guyana and Antigua and Barbuda to transition to online and blended teaching; it has also offered additional training for Faculty in designing online assessments across institutions in five Caribbean countries. Through a partnership with the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) COL is supporting training in assistive technologies for over 50 special education teachers and professionals in six Caribbean small states. The accreditation councils in Jamaica and Guyana have also benefitted from COL support to strengthen capacity to quality assure online education. Antigua State College has benefitted from a COL ICT augmentation project and developed 16 courses as a result of TEL implementation in their institution. Other TEL activities have included support for Belize’s Ministry of Education through C-DELTA training of trainers.

The presentation then summarised activities in the Skills Sector. Skills Online was acknowledged as having been very successful and three governments – Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago – had launched their own national programmes to scale up skilling. Under Skills for Work, COL led the review of Guidelines and Criteria for the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) and continues to support institutional strategies and action plans for ODL in TVET targeting all Caribbean countries. Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) has partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture in Antigua and Barbuda and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) in Jamaica to provide training for farmers and increase their access to finance and market opportunity. Through the Gender Initiative COL has worked in Belize and Guyana to support the Ministry of Youth and NGOs to train underserved and underperforming young men in technology, livelihood skills and entrepreneurship, such that they gain access to economic opportunity.

Throughout the presentation, Focal Points from individual countries were invited to share their perspective on the activities that had taken or were taking place in their countries and their inputs were very constructive. Generally, the Focal Points found the presentation interesting because of what they learned about the nature of COL activities in neighbouring countries and the recognition that there were shared priorities and potential for joint work on projects. This led to a brief discussion around the need to collaborate on projects, share knowledge and a reminder that the VUSSC network was a useful channel for greater sharing and collaboration.
Social Gathering

The programme included a social event hosted in the evening by the Ministry -- this was an outdoor get-together at the Port Royal Hotel and Marina overlooking Kingston Harbour and featured live music from the Calabar High School Boys’ band. The Minister of Education and Youth and the Chief Education Officer joined with senior members from the Jamaica Teaching Council and representatives of the University Council of Jamaica to ensure that the COL staff and Focal Points enjoyed Jamaican food, music and hospitality. A good time was had by all!

Day 2 - January 31, 2023

Recap of the Previous Day

Facilitator: Professor Wale Adekunle

The second day opened with a synthesis of the presentations and discussions from Day 1. This served not just as a reminder of what was discussed the day before, but also as a climate setter for the second day. The presenter made a summary of each presentation, raised the highlights of each and included the summaries of the discussions that followed each presentation.

SESSION 7: A Green Learning Agenda

Facilitator: Professor Asha Kanwar

This presentation was made by Professor Asha Kanwar. It was designed to address the issue of climate change from the standpoint of education and propose some challenges for Governments in the Commonwealth and beyond.

She premised the discussion on the climate crisis in the Commonwealth and established the fact that the climate crisis is one of the defining issues of our world today. Going on, she asserted that science has demonstrated clearly that our human activities, which lead to increase in greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, especially from the mid-to-late twentieth century, have been responsible for the drastic changes in global climatic patterns. She added that the result of this change in climate is apparent in the devastating storms, floods and other natural disasters that have become a regular occurrence across the globe today. She asserted that Commonwealth countries have not been spared from the negative effects of the changing climate, providing examples such as Cyclone Idai, which hit eastern Mozambique on 14 March 2019, Hurricane Dorian which made landfall on the Abaco Islands and reached the island of Grand Bahamas in 2019, among other natural disasters.
She said that in many of these cases, there were devastating effects on educational systems where infrastructures, among other things, have been affected. For example, Cyclone Idai affected 3504 classrooms in Mozambique disrupting 335,132 students. Hurricane Dorian devastated schools in the Grand Bahamas, volcanic eruptions left the entire population in St. Vincent without water and 80% of Togo’s population was impacted by volcanic eruptions and the ensuing tsunami. Professor Kanwar summarized the impact of climate change on education to include the damage to infrastructures, resource materials, loss of data and records and the collapse of the systems leading to an increase in out-of-school population.

She declared that the education sector also contributes to the changing climate, adding that this takes place through a number of direct and indirect avenues. Direct avenues mentioned include emissions from construction of school and infrastructure, emissions through energy that is used in schools among others. Quoting data from Bill Gates, she added that other sectors are also contributing to climate change. These include the construction sector which contributes 31%, electricity 27%, agriculture 19%, and travel and transport 16%.

Against this background, she discussed COL’s approach, which is based on four pillars including reduction of carbon emissions through ODL coupled with raising awareness on disaster preparedness through public educational campaigns for resilience, reskilling people through training for the green jobs of the future and making the educational system more resilient. She listed a number of approaches which points toward sustainable development that have generally been ignored. These models include the Brundtland Commission Report of 1987, Education for Sustainable development of the UN, Whole School Sustainability, the concept of the Earth University and Japan’s School Lunch Program. All of these approaches emphasise sustainable development.

COL’s President also mentioned the E-Apprenticeship Alternate Delivery Design Initiative (EADDI) model with the Barefoot Wireless Engineer Training in India as a direct racialisation of a community-based model. Continuing on to make a case for community-based models, she informed that studies have shown that countries where individualist orientations are stronger tended to have higher per capita CO2 emissions. In contradistinction from these, models that are community-centred and instil a greater sense of interdependence and responsibility are crucial to behavioural change for environmental conservation. She pointed out that key approaches to attain environmental conservation must include three components, as follows:

1. Greening the Curriculum to integrate ESD
2. Greening campus and site operations
3. Using distance and online learning

In greening the curriculum, she gave examples of Simon Fraser University in Canada where environmental literacy is part of the curriculum, as well as other universities including Sunway University in Malaysia and the University of Pretoria South Africa, where alignment of the curriculum with SDGs has been achieved. She also gave examples of universities where the greening of the campus has been
experimented. These include the Australian National University, where plans have been developed to decrease carbon emissions, increase renewable energy generation and increase sustainable commuting; and Groningen University in the Netherlands which offered a roadmap to carbon neutrality through energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation.

Looking at the past several years, Professor Kanwar summarised lessons learnt, including the fact that sustainability as a concept should be moved from the margins to the centre and that having dedicated resources with incentives, along with developing partnerships and dedicated platforms, plus work for sustainability. She added that leadership is also important at all relevant levels, including the management students and the community.

From these lessons, she moved to describe the Green Learning Agenda. She based this part of the discourse on the views from 26 Commonwealth countries which could be summarized as follows:

- Integrating climate literacy in the curriculum
- Aligning climate change policies with education policies and better coordination between ministries
- Building the capacity of teachers
- Digitising and sharing Indigenous knowledge related to environmental conservation
- Developing ICT infrastructure, including access to devices and connectivity

Besides these views, she also referred to the recommendation of the COL High Level Panel on Climate Change and Education which was charged with the task of identifying concrete action plans, exploring areas of collaboration and partnership and developing a Report for Commonwealth Education Ministers.

Professor Kanwar reported that the High-Level Panel had made significant observations that urgent action was required, a need for behavioural change on climate action, and-or the engagement and empowerment of youths. Other observations made by the group included the need to promote disaster response and recovery through education and lifelong learning, as well as the need to collaborate with the private sector. From their observations the High Level Panel recommended the use of resilient infrastructure in educational systems, development skills for the blue and green economies and the promotion of climate justice. She warned that climate justice will address inequalities, pointing out that countries with harmful gender norms and gender-discriminatory education policies are also countries with low levels of climate resilience and high levels of vulnerability to climate disasters. She added that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to disasters and that girls are typically excluded from technical fields and STEM – important fields required by the green economy.

Professor Kanwar concluded the presentation by articulating the idea of the Green Learning Agenda to save the planet. She said this will be composed of three basic sections:

1. Skills for Green Jobs: Skills aimed at fulfilling the requirements of green jobs and supporting the transition to a low-carbon green economy;
2. Green life Skills: Cross-cutting skills that serve both technical, instrumental, and adaptive, transformative ends; and

The Caribbean islands are at the frontline of the effects of climate change. As a result, the discussion after this presentation was animated. Many participants applauded the presentation and saw in the Green Learning Agenda the way to go for all countries of the Caribbean. A number of participants indicated that they would take the discussion further when they returned to their countries.

SESSION 8: AI-powered ChatGPT: Implications for the Education Sector

Facilitator: Dr Venkataraman Balaji

Given the rise in popularity of ChatGPT, and the recognition that it has far-reaching implications for education, it was decided to include a session that demonstrated how it can be used, and encouraged Focal Points to consider the overall impact, both positive and negative, on education. Joining virtually via Zoom, COL Vice President Dr V. Balaji, hosted the session. Beginning with a description of what ChatGPT is and highlighting its ability to generate human-like texts to explain its exceptionally fast-growing user base, he proceeded to demonstrate how it is being used, especially in the education sector. By presenting a series of screenshots that he had generated in response to instructions and questions previously submitted to ChatGPT, Dr Balaji provided a variety of examples that demonstrated how ChatGPT works and how it can be used for (i) content generation (ii) preparing marketing and promotional materials (iii) producing extended writing tasks, such as essays and opinion pieces (iv) improving existing pieces of writing and (v) solving mathematical computing and other technical problems. He engaged the Focal Points, inviting them to submit their own questions which ChatGPT answered in real-time and then challenged them to assess the precision, accuracy and usefulness of ChatGPT’s responses. This activity generated much enthusiasm as Focal Points exchanged ideas and raised concerns. They recognised that ChatGPT could add value to teaching and learning experiences but also expressed concern regarding the risks and the changes it could drive in teaching, assessment and research, as well as the need for Ministries and institutions to draft policies for ChatGPT use.

Overall, this session generated a great deal of enthusiasm and was the subject of several post-meeting conversations among participants. Following the meeting, requests came from two Ministries for Dr Balaji to repeat the presentation for senior officials, as they consider the practical and policy implications surrounding this natural language processing chatbot.
SESSION 9: OER for Quality Education

Facilitator: Professor Asha Kanwar

Given that so many of the Focal Points were new to COL, this session, led by the President, was timely and of great interest. The session aimed to promote OER by illustrating the key benefits it affords: expanding access to, improving quality of and cutting costs associated with education. Professor Kanwar began by giving a historical overview to explain why, from where and how the OER movement had developed and evolved over the years. Starting with the 2002 UNESCO Forum on the Impact of Open Courseware for Higher Education in Developing Countries, she traced the role played by a series of international consultations up to the second OER World Congress in 2017 to explain increased commitment, availability of repositories and growing awareness among countries and institutions of the benefits associated with OER adoption.

She then shifted attention to five key challenges: Policy; Inclusive and equitable access; Capacity; Language and cultural issues; and Developing sustainable models. For each, she provided statistics and evidence to illustrate the nature and extent of the challenge and to suggest solutions. Throughout the presentation she drew on examples of COL’s work, particularly in developing national and institutional policies to guide OER, materials development and building capacity for institutions and countries to contribute to and use OER. The final section of the presentation focused on using OER and how copyright and licensing works.

As evidenced from the brief exchange following the presentation and the frequency with which OER was mentioned in the penultimate session, the Focal Points found this session very informative. They recognized that as COL Focal Points one of their roles is to foster awareness among decision-makers and encourage OER policy development and capacity building.

SESSION 10: Development of Concrete Action Items

Facilitator: Professor Wale Adekunle

The session on the development of concrete action items synchronized well with the expectations of the participants that concrete actions should follow the meeting in Kingston.

The session was divided into three parts. The first was a presentation on concrete action planning and the basic elements required in an action plan. A template was provided to guide participants on the content of the action plan to be developed. The template required them to provide the theme, desired outcomes,
strategies to be used, timelines, responsibility and the monitoring procedure. In a sense, this was also to observe how much of the thematic discussions of the meeting they had picked up and were ready to apply. The second part regarded group work on the development of concrete action items. Here, participants were divided into two self-forming groups for the work. Each group was asked to select a rapporteur to take notes during the group work and articulate their plans for presentation at its conclusion. The third part was to present the plans to the plenary.

Group 1 was made up of Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis and St Lucia. The group presented an Action Plan indicating action items related to the Modernization of TVET and the Green Learning Agenda in relation to the Green and Blue Economy. With respect to the Modernization of TVET, the expected outcome was to have people that are “trained to function in the world of work.” They planned to attain this by modernizing the curriculum, mobilizing resources and training through a well forged collaboration with relevant industries. They perceived an increasing participation of the private sector in a model similar to the Community-based approach like the E-Apprenticeship Alternate Delivery Design Initiative (EADDI) model with the Barefoot wireless engineer training in India as a direct practicalisation of the model. The sole responsibility for attaining this outcome was placed on the Ministry of Education. This is opened up room for a possible collaboration with the TVET in COL.

The second action item presented by the group was about the Green Learning Agenda to achieve improved awareness, knowledge and competence for sustainable development. Their strategic plan was to provide opportunities for education and training in the blue and green economies for greater energy availability and improved food security. The responsibility for these was placed on the Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Tourism. This opened up opportunities for further collaboration with COL’s L3F initiative.

The second group was made up of the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago. They produced two themes, namely OER and the Green Learning Agenda. With OER the desired outcome was to apply enhanced teaching and learning through increased access to quality online materials. The strategies they proposed included developing OER policy, securing repositories, curating content according to the needs of a local repository, making students and teachers aware of the benefits of OER, along with training to locate, create and customize/align content. The responsibility for this was placed on the technical arm of the Ministry of Education, School Management and teachers.
For the second theme of the Green Learning Agenda, the planned outcome was to demonstrate a green energy approach in everyday activities and in food security. The strategies included the reduction of emissions, reskilling for green and blue economy and raising awareness. The responsibilities were directed towards both the Ministries of Education and Agriculture.

**SESSION 11: Focal Point Roundtable**

**Facilitator:** Dr Mairette Newman

The purpose of the penultimate session was to get Focal Points to distil and articulate their ‘take-home messages’ from the presentations and discussions over the two days. In order to do this the Focal Points were invited to identify (i) their most pressing regional priority, (ii) their most pressing national priority, (iii) one follow-up action they could commit to and (iv) one ‘take home message.” They posted their responses to the shared padlet online board which can be accessed at Annex 3.

Chief among the pressing regional and national priorities were (i) the need to increase and enhance the use of OER, (ii) strengthen TVET, (iii) address special education needs and the underperformance of boys and (iv) integrate the green and blue economies into the curriculum. Not surprisingly, many of the take-home messages aligned with these areas. They included: the importance of articulating TVET education and training within their educational systems; the value of OER curation and creation and the need to integrate it into teaching and learning; the need for increased awareness of and training in the blue and green economies; and the need for the region to collaborate on projects, pool resources for development and share best practices and solutions.

In the closing moments of the session, the Focal Points expressed gratitude for having been given the opportunity to learn from COL and each other while sharing experiences. A point of interest was that so many of the Focal Points mentioned the importance of collaborating and tapping into COL support in the areas of ODL to help solve the region’s problems. Several remarked that they had not been aware of the Green Learning Agenda, yet it was relevant to their countries. The posts on the padlet also reflected these remarks.
Closing Session

Facilitator: Professor Asha Kanwar

Professor Kanwar gave the final words of the meeting. She thanked the host country of Jamaica and especially the Minister of Education, the Honourable Ms Fayval Williams, for her hospitality and support of COL. She also thanked the participants for attending the meeting and for working with COL for the overall purpose of improving sustainable development in member countries through learning based on ODL modulated by ICT. She also mentioned that their participation had been helpful to COL in multiple ways.

The President reflected on the presentations that had been made at the meeting and on the country reports and action plans. She summarized the overall themes that came out of the meeting, including Skills for Work/TVET, capacity building for teachers and issues of livelihoods through both the blue and the green economies, integrating OER in teaching and learning.

She also reflected on the issue of underperformance of boys as being a dominant feature of the region. In the area of agriculture, for example, she mentioned that the promotion of livelihoods, through horticulture and other enterprises for the attainment of food security based on identified national priorities, seemed to be a predominant issue in the region.

In response to the request by participants for more opportunities to interact, she emphasized that COL would consider organising a mid-year Zoom meeting to create additional opportunities for members to interact, exchange ideas and share experiences, including reports from other Regional FPs.

She added that COL would work closely with the Focal Points and their respective countries to see that raised priority at the meeting would be addressed. The President concluded that COL staff would make it a duty to provide adequate information to FPs as they visit their countries while inviting them to every training programme.

The vote of thanks on behalf of the Focal Points was moved by the Focal Point from Guyana, Dr Olato Sam. He expressed appreciation for the professional and interesting manner in which the meeting had been arranged and assured Professor Kanwar that COL had full support from the Caribbean Focal Points.
### Annex 1: Participant List

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name and Address of the Participants</th>
<th>Role</th>
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</table>
| 1      | Antigua and Barbuda| Dr. Patricia J.A. Benn  
Lecturer  
Antigua State College  
P O Box 2154,  
St. John’s  
Antigua and Barbuda   | Focal Point     |
| 2      | The Bahamas        | Ms Terrice L. Carey-Curry  
Assistant Director of Education (Acting)  
Professional Development Section  
Department of Education  
Bahamas Ministry of Education and Technical and Vocational Training (MOETVT)  
University Drive P.O. Box N-3913/14. Nassau, N.P.  
The Bahamas     | Focal Point     |
| 3      | Barbados           | Dr Ramona Ericka Archer-Bradshaw  
Chief Education Officer  
Ministry of Education, Technological & Vocational Training Elsie Payne Complex,  
Constitution Road  
St. Michael  
Barbados  | Focal Point     |
| 4      | Grenada            | Mr. Kade Krisher De Coteau  
Information Technology Officer  
Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture  
Sir Eric Gairy Botanical Gardens, Tanteen  
St. George  
Grenada  | Focal Point     |
| 5      | Guyana             | Dr Olatocumbo Joseph Sam  
Education Specialist  
Ministry of Education  
26 Brickdam, Georgetown,  
Guyana  | Focal Point     |
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<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Role</th>
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</table>
| 6      | Jamaica | Dr. Phylicia Marshall  
Assistant Chief Education Officer, Tertiary Unit  
Ministry of Education and Youth  
2-4 National Heroes Circle, Kingston  
Jamaica | Focal Point |
| 7      | Jamaica | The Hon Fayval Williams  
Minister  
Ministry of Education and Youth Jamaica  
2-4 National Heroes Circle, Kingston  
Jamaica | Minister |
| 8      | Jamaica | Mrs Michelle Williams  
Director  
Tertiary Financial Support  
Ministry of Education, Jamaica  
2-4 National Heroes Circle, Kingston  
Jamaica | Ministry |
| 9      | Jamaica | Mrs Michelle Desgouttes  
Education Officer  
Tertiary Unit  
Ministry of Education, Jamaica  
2-4 National Heroes Circle, Kingston  
Jamaica | Ministry |
| 10     | Jamaica | Dr Winsome Gordon  
CEO  
Jamaica Teaching Council  
2 St. Lucia Avenue Kingston 5 Jamaica W.I. | Ministry |
| 11     | Jamaica | Ms Kelleen Johnson-Davis  
Head of Department,  
Faculty of General Studies  
Caribbean Maritime University  
Norman Manley Highway Palisadoes Park, P.O. Box 8081. Kingston C.S.O., Kingston Jamaica | Special Guest |
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Racquel Wright Lecturer Caribbean Maritime University Norman Manley Highway Palisadoes Park, P.O. Box 8081. Kingston C.S.O., Kingston Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Marcia Rowe-Amonde Senior Director HEART Trust/National Training Agency (NTA) 6B Oxford Road, Kingston 5 Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Dawn Barrett Adams Managing Director (Acting) HEART Trust/National Training Agency (NTA) 6B Oxford Road, Kingston 5 Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Nancy George Consultant Nancy George &amp; Associates Nancy George &amp; Associates Kingston, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Ms Michele McFarlane Vice Principal Sam Sharpe Teachers' College Box 40, Granville P.O. St. James, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Prof Bernadette Warner Executive Vice President Institutional Effectiveness and Research University of the Commonwealth Caribbean 17 Worthington Avenue Kingston 5, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Sheilah Paul Provost University of the Commonwealth Caribbean 17 Worthington Avenue Kingston 5, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Mrs Dianne Boyd Director College of Graduate Studies University of the Commonwealth Caribbean 17 Worthington Avenue Kingston 5, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Jeanette Bartley-Bryan Associate Vice President Distance Learning University of Technology, Jamaica 237 Old Hope Road, Kingston, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Prof Shermaine Barrett Dean Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies University of Technology, Jamaica 237 Old Hope Road, Kingston, Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Marcia Rainford Director School of Education The University of the West Indies Mona Jamaica</td>
<td>Special Guest</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Dr Schontal Moore Lecturer The University of the West Indies Mona Jamaica</td>
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| 24    | Jamaica                  | Dr Tashane Haynes-Brown  
Coordinator  
Undergraduate Programmes  
School of Education  
The University of the West Indies  
Mona  
Jamaica                                                                 | Special Guest      |
| 25    | Saint Kitts and Nevis    | Mr Francil Antonio Morris  
Chief Education Officer  
Ministry of Education  
Stanford Building  
Airport Road, Basseterre, Saint Kitts  
Saint Kitts & Nevis                                                                 | Focal Point        |
| 26    | Saint Lucia              | Ms Karen Lorraine Renee  
Curriculum Specialist - Media Technology (Ag.)  
Curriculum and Materials Development Unit  
4th Floor Francis Compton Building  
Waterfront Castries  
Saint Lucia                                                                 | Focal Point        |
| 27    | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | Mrs Anne-Marie Kay Martin-Jack  
Chief Education Officer  
Ministry of Education and National Reconciliation  
Halifax Street  
Kingstown  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines                                                                 | Focal Point        |
| 28    | Trinidad and Tobago      | Mrs Anna Meenawatee Singh  
Director  
Curriculum Planning and Development Division  
Ministry of Education 5 St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain  
The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago                                                                 | Focal Point        |
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<td>Canada</td>
<td>Prof Asha Kanwar</td>
<td>COL</td>
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<td>President and CEO</td>
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<td>Commonwealth of Learning</td>
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<td>4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500, Burnaby V5H 4M2,</td>
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<td>British Columbia, Canada</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Dr Mairette Newman</td>
<td>COL</td>
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<td>Education Specialist: Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
<td>Prof Wale Adekunle</td>
<td>COL</td>
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<td>Adviser: Lifelong Learning for Farmers</td>
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Annex 2: Agenda

Kingston, Jamaica | January 30-31, 2023

Accommodation: Courtyard by Marriott, Kingston, Jamaica
Meeting Venue: Frangipani Room
Date: Monday, January 30 and Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Objectives:
The objectives of the two-day Regional Focal Points Meeting are to:

1. Share the key elements of the COL Strategic Plan 2021-2027 and discuss how the outcomes and impact will be evaluated.
2. Identify 3-5 national priorities in education and skills development and discuss how COL can address these.
3. Share a report on COL activities in your country.
4. Raise awareness about the benefits of open educational resources (OER).
5. Discuss the key elements of a green learning agenda and the role of the education sector.
6. Highlight the role of Focal Points and how COL can strengthen the network.

Expected Outcomes:
1. Identification of specific national and regional priorities that can be implemented within the context of COL’S Strategic Plan 2021-2027. This would include an action plan for adopting OER and a green learning agenda.
2. Concrete collaborations between different stakeholders established.
3. Focal Point network strengthened.
Date: Monday, January 30, 2023
Time: 08:00-16:30

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:45 - 08:00</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Wale Adekunle and Dr Mairette Newman</td>
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<td>08:00 – 08:45</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Opening Session</td>
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<td>Dr Mairette Newman</td>
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<td>Prayer: Dr Winsome Gordon, CEO, Jamaica Teaching Council</td>
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<td>Overview of COL: Professor Asha Kanwar, President and CEO, COL</td>
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<td>Introduction of Guest: Dr Mairette Newman, ES, COL</td>
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<td>Guest: The Honourable Fayval Williams - Minister of Education and Youth, Jamaica</td>
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<td>Word of Thanks: Dr Phylicia Marshall, COL Focal Point, Jamaica</td>
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<td>08:45 – 10:00</td>
<td>BREAKFAST</td>
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<td>Focal Points Photo</td>
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<td>10:00- 10:45</td>
<td>SESSION 1</td>
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<td>Introduction of Participants and sharing of expectations</td>
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<td>Professor Wale Adekunle</td>
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<td>Adoption of Programme</td>
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<td>10:45 - 11:30</td>
<td>SESSION 2</td>
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<td>COVID-19: Shaping Education for the Future</td>
<td>Presentation &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>Professor Asha Kanwar</td>
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<td>11:30-11:45</td>
<td>HEALTH BREAK</td>
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<td>11:45 – 12:30</td>
<td>SESSION 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Role of Focal Points</td>
<td>Presentation Think, pair, share</td>
<td>Dr Mairette Newman</td>
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<td>How much do you know about COL?</td>
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<td>12:30- 13:30</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<td>13:30-14:30</td>
<td>SESSION 4</td>
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<td>Country Reports</td>
<td>Presentation of Reports</td>
<td>Dr Mairette Newman</td>
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<td>Findings from Focal Points’ Reports</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Priorities, commonalities, and differences</td>
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<td>14:30 – 15:15</td>
<td>SESSION 5</td>
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<td>Monitoring and Evaluation for Results</td>
<td>Presentation and Discussion</td>
<td>Professor Wale Adekunle</td>
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<td>15:15-15:30</td>
<td>HEALTH BREAK</td>
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<td>15:30 - 16:30</td>
<td>SESSION 6</td>
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<td>COL Activities in the Region</td>
<td>Presentation and Discussion</td>
<td>Dr Mairette Newman</td>
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<td>18:00 – 21:00</td>
<td>Reception hosted by the Ministry of Education at The Morgan’s Harbour Hotel and Marina, Port Royal</td>
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<td>Hosted by Ministry of Education and Youth, Jamaica</td>
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### Report on the Regional Focal Points Meeting: CARIBBEAN

**Date:** Tuesday, January 31, 2023  
**Time:** 09:00-16:30

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<th>Time</th>
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| 09:00 - 09:15 | Welcome to Day 2  
Recap of the Previous Day                                                   | Plenary                 | Professor Wale Adekunle                      |
| 09:15 - 10:15 | A Green Learning Agenda  
Climate Change and Education  
What can governments do?                                                   | Presentation and Discussion  
Sharing of information          | Professor Asha Kanwar                          |
| 10:15-11:00   | AI-powered ChatGPT: are there implications for the education sector?  | Demonstration  
Discussion                      | Dr Venkataraman Balaji (joining remotely) |
| 11:00-11:30   | HEALTH BREAK                                                             |                         |                                              |
| 11:30 – 12:15 | OER for Quality Education: How can we benefit?                           | Presentation and Discussion | Professor Asha Kanwar                      |
| 12:15 - 13:00 | Development of Concrete Action Items                                      | Group work               | Professor Wale Adekunle                      |
| 13:00 - 14:00 | LUNCH                                                                    |                         |                                              |
| 14:00 - 15:00 | Development of Concrete Action Items                                      | Presentations            | Professor Wale Adekunle                      |
| 15:00 - 15:30 | Focal Point Roundtable to Distil 'Take Home' Messages                    | Roundtable               | Dr Mairette Newman                          |
| 15:30 - 16:00 | HEALTH BREAK                                                             |                         |                                              |
| 16:00 - 16:30 | Closing Session  
Summary and Wrap-up                                                      |                         | Professor Asha Kanwar                      |

FREE TIME FOR NETWORKING
Annex 3: Summary of ‘Take Home Messages’

COL Focal Points-Caribbean: Roundtable
JAN 31, 2023

Most pressing regional priority
OERs
OER
The use of OERs to enhance teaching and learning.
Open Education Resources
Green & Blue Economy
Incorporating the Green and Blue agenda into the curriculum
OER
Creation and Curation
Green & Blue Economy
The integration of the green and blue economy into the curriculum.
TVET
Fully articulating Technical Vocational Education and Training within the educational structures.
Tech Vocational Education

Most pressing national priority
Curate or develop OERs aligned to curriculum.
OERs
TVET Education
TVET
Technical and Vocational Education
TVET Education
Education of Boys
Student Performance
Increasing students’ performance - especially male students and marginalized youth.
Inclusion
Special Education Needs
Inclusion
Coding and Data analytics
Curriculum
Developing a curriculum for artificial intelligence in the school
Follow-up action

OER
Helping others to buy into the use of OER

OER
Push awareness and benefits of OERs as exit strategy to paid eBooks programme. Using local budget and COL partnership; develop a strategy for implementing OERs based on the needs assessment.

OER
Determination of the need for OERs in the country

TVET
Education programmes to meet current and projected careers, labour market demands/skills required for employment and the workforce.

TVET
Awareness of its importance. Modernization of its curriculum

TVET
Expand mentorship and entrepreneurship programmes.

TVET
Adopting a hybrid approach to TVET

Boys' Education
Identifying existing gap areas and needs and mobilizing resources to address same.

Special Needs Education
Needs assessment for students with special needs - How do you meet the needs of students and teachers to engage in a virtual space?

Special Needs Education
Collect the necessary data to determine current needs of those in the delivery of Special Education and provide opportunities for educators to access training through OER.

Blue and Green Economy
A review of possibilities, programmes, resources, partners

Coding
The need for training and the exposure of teachers to the rudiments of this area.

Take-home message

Collaboration
Collaboration with other countries can strengthen the education system. We must collaborate and pool resources for development of the region's population. Together we are stronger.

Collaboration
Collaboration between/among COL Focal Points is not only important but is critical for effective project/programme implementation.

Collaboration
Countries are willing to collaborate on projects for a more successful outcome.

Collaboration
Communication, collaboration, connecting and consensus building. Remove the silos.

Collaboration
Networking with countries that presently have a plan and how as a country we can gain more working together.
The need for synergy across the various sectors in the country and highlighting the benefits that can be had from COL.

Collaboration - TVET
TVET is an area for possible collaboration with other territories and entities.

Collaboration - Boys Education
Need to collaborate with each other to develop strategies to engage boys in schools.

Collaboration
The opportunities available for collaboration between countries and the benefits of Open Education Resources.

COL support
Clearly communicate the support COL can give and the role of the focal points. - Encourage MoE to examine their national priorities and identify priorities which align with COL priorities and strategically identify areas for support

COL Support
COLs willingness to support the national priorities.