

Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors

April 19, 2022

Report of the Commonwealth of Learning

Context

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the greatest disruptions in education in human history forcing the global community to embrace distance and online learning. The pandemic has also widened inequalities, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. As an intergovernmental organisation, established by Commonwealth Heads of Government to promote distance learning and technologies for human resource development, the role of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has never been more prominent. COL is nearing the completion of the first year of its new six-year Strategic Plan 2021-2027 ‘Learning for Sustainable Development’. This Strategic Plan provides a robust blueprint for COL to support Member States in their efforts to rebuild robust and resilient systems of education and training by providing bold and imaginative solutions to address future risks and uncertainties. Pandemics, natural disasters and widening inequalities will continue to challenge our systems. The lessons learned in the past will help shape a better future.

Background

1. Created by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987, COL is the world’s only intergovernmental organisation with a mandate to promote open, distance and technology-enabled learning in support of sustainable development.
2. COL’s mission is to help governments expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using open and distance learning (ODL) and appropriate technologies. It assists governmental, non-governmental and community partners in developing policy, building capacity, refining models, creating materials and nurturing collaborative networks.
3. The Strategic Plan 2021-2027 focuses on ‘Learning for Sustainable Development’ and has identified three pathways of change: (i) Building national resilience, (ii) Strengthening institutions, and (iii) Improving lives and livelihoods. COL believes that learning is the key to sustainable development. Learning must lead to opportunities for economic growth, social inclusion and environmental conservation.
4. COL’s strategic goals are:
 - a. Quality education and lifelong learning for all;
 - b. Skills development for sustainable livelihoods; and
 - c. Gender equality and inclusion.
5. COL’s priorities are:
 - a. Development and promotion of Open Educational Resources (OER); and
 - b. Education and training for women and girls.

6. Over the course of six years, COL aims to improve the capacity of 1,800 organisations to leverage technology for education and training, increase quality learning opportunities for 2 million learners, including from marginalised communities, and strengthen the sustainable livelihoods of 200,000 people. These targets will be achieved through the appropriate use of technologies. As a small and specialist intergovernmental agency, partnerships underpin all of COL's work. COL promotes cooperation and collaboration among Member States, Commonwealth bodies, multilateral organisations, educational institutions, civil society and the private sector.
7. Even though the COVID-19 closures continue to disrupt and delay activities in the field, COL has made satisfactory progress towards achieving and exceeding some of the targets identified for the first year of the Plan.

Reporting to Governments

8. In addition to annual reporting to the Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors and its own Board, COL typically presents its Strategic Plan, along with individual country reports, to Commonwealth education ministers when they meet triennially. However, due to the pandemic, the meeting was postponed and will be held after four years on 27-28 April, 2022.
9. 'COL in the Commonwealth', a compendium of individual Country Reports, is published at the end of each Plan period. The Country Reports for 2015-2021 and an Impact Report will be presented at the 21st Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in April.
10. COL has a network of Focal Points, nominated by Education Ministers, in each Member State and keeps them apprised of its work on an ongoing basis.
11. COL participates in Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) and presents its progress report to Foreign Ministers. COL will participate in the 26th CHOGM scheduled to take place from 20 - 24 June in Kigali, Rwanda.

Six-Year Plan 2021-2027

12. The Strategic Plan 2021-2027, approved by the COL Board, is titled 'Learning for Sustainable Development.' COL is committed to realising its vision of achieving development goals through universal access to learning.
13. COL's mission is translated into a comprehensive Logic Model that specifies the outcomes COL aims to achieve through its activities. These activities are divided into two programme sectors – Education and Skills, with Gender and Technology-Enabled Learning as cross-cutting themes.

The Education sector has four initiatives: Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education, and Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

The Skills sector works in both formal and non-formal learning. The initiatives in this sector are: Skills for Work, Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) and Girls Inspire.

As cross-cutting initiatives, Gender and Technology-Enabled Learning support COL's programme sectors.

14. The **Education** sector initiatives are as follows:

Open Schooling: Due to progress made in achieving universal primary education, secondary schools struggle to absorb the surge of pupils completing primary schooling. Open schooling is a recognised and viable solution to the growing demand for equitable access to secondary education, especially for girls and marginalised groups, particularly in remote locations. Governments are seeking to redefine the way secondary education addresses societal needs by diversifying the curriculum. This means making technical and vocational programmes available alongside academic offerings – something that open schools are well positioned to do (<https://www.col.org/education/open-schooling/>). Open schools are currently being supported in **Bangladesh, Belize, Botswana, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.**

Teacher Education: One of the targets of SDG4 seeks to 'substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.' Governments and the education sector seek to increase teacher supply and improve teacher quality. COL's Teacher Education initiative is focused on school-based, in-service training models, which can cut costs and achieve scale. The model promotes the use of open and distance learning to increase the number of qualified teachers in the Commonwealth and focuses on the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and OER in teacher training to improve the quality of teaching (<https://www.col.org/education/teacher-education/>). COL is working with institutions in **Ghana, India, Kenya, Kiribati, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Uganda.**

Higher Education: COL continues to support policy makers, institutions and leaders in higher education to harness the potential of ODL and technology and enable them to cope with the increasing demand for quality higher education, rising costs and diminishing public funding. COL has developed quality assurance frameworks and employability integration approaches for higher education institutions to adopt while offering distance education programmes that are accessible, affordable and can be delivered to learners anywhere, anytime with the use of appropriate technologies, including online learning (<https://www.col.org/education/higher-education/>). COL is working with higher education institutions in **Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Fiji, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia.**

The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC): Strengthening and improving the quality and scope of existing tertiary institutions is a key priority for small states. The VUSSC network represents **32 small states of the Commonwealth** dedicated to expanding access to tertiary education. VUSSC has connected institutions through online technologies to promote eLearning and the sharing of educational resources using collaborative and multi-institutional partnerships. COL's emphasis is on the delivery of VUSSC courses and programmes and nurturing partnerships to promote blue economy skills for the youth and persons with disabilities (PWD) (<https://www.col.org/education/virtual-university-for-small->

[states-of-the-commonwealth-vussc/](#)). VUSSC is active in small states in Africa (**Botswana, Eswatini, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles**); the Caribbean (**Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**); and the Pacific (**Fiji, Tonga**).

15. The **Skills** sector initiatives are as follows:

Skills for Work: COL has demonstrated that using ODL and learning technologies can increase access to quality technical and vocational skills development equitably. The role of the Skills for Work initiative (<https://www.col.org/skills/skills-for-work>) in creating a skilled workforce of lifelong learners for the informal and formal economies is constantly challenged by urban-rural and gender divides that exclude large numbers of learners from skills training systems. COL is working with institutional partners, industry and governments in **Bangladesh, Fiji, The Gambia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Mauritius, Nauru, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu and Zambia** to create contextualised, high-quality flexible and blended learning approaches to scale up skills development. Under the Skills Online project, COL works with partners in **Bangladesh, Barbados, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Kenya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tonga and Trinidad and Tobago**, and online learning providers Coursera and Udemy, to provide job-oriented skills to unemployed youth, combining the power of online with offline mentorship.

Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F): COL's L3F follows a holistic approach to capacity building which emphasises continuous learning for farmers using ICTs and linking human capital with social and financial capital. COVID-19 has impacted food security in different regions, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. L3F empowers vulnerable rural women and their families to gain knowledge, create their own self-directed learning process, organise themselves to solve the challenges of food security and improve their living conditions. Under the L3F model, COL serves as a catalyst in bringing together institutions, civil society and the private sector to build the capacity of communities through gender-sensitive learning (<https://www.col.org/skills/lifelong-learning-for-farmers/>). Nine countries, **Antigua and Barbuda, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia** are implementing the L3F model.

GIRLS Inspire: This initiative aims to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment through promoting educational attainment and economic participation of women and girls. This initiative follows a context-specific and holistic approach, aligned to COL's pathways of change, with coordinated interventions operating at the individual, household, community, and societal levels. GIRLS Inspire (<https://www.col.org/skills/girls-inspire/>) aligns its work with local and national development needs for scale and sustainability. It uses community mobilisation to influence change in national policy, while providing linkages with employers for internships and employment opportunities that facilitate access to credit for self-employment. This is being implemented with governments and civil society organisations in ten countries: **Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, Tanzania and Uganda**.

16. The **Cross-Cutting** areas are as follows:

Gender Equality: COL recognises that the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment is central to its agenda of learning for sustainable development. As a cross-cutting theme, COL’s gender equality programme is shaped by the views, interests and needs of both women and men. Gender mainstreaming is an organisational strategy for COL. While women and girls are deprived of equal access to education compared to men and boys, inequalities and barriers to education are experienced by young men and boys too. COL has a Gender Policy, a Gender Action Plan and its website provides links to resources and research on gender and ODL/ ICT (<https://www.col.org/cross-cutting-initiatives/gender/>). COL is working with governments in **Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Tonga** to address the issue of boys’ academic underperformance and high drop-out rates.

Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL): As a cross-cutting initiative, TEL supports the development of tested models and scalable platforms. It also encourages more governments and institutions to integrate technology-enabled learning and OER policies and practices to improve teaching and learning for skills development. COL believes that for technology to have a transformative effect in teaching and learning, a focus on policy-technology-capacity is needed and practice must be based on research evidence (<https://www.col.org/cross-cutting-initiatives/technology-enabled-learning/>). This initiative is working with governments and institutions in **Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Belize, Cameroon, Fiji, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa and Sri Lanka**.

17. Through an agreement signed with the Government of India, COL established its regional office, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) in New Delhi. CEMCA has worked in **Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Maldives and Sri Lanka** during this year.
18. Recognising that the Commonwealth has diverse and geographically dispersed populations, COL has established regional centers to support capacity building in the field. COL supports the Research and Training Institute for Distance and Open Learning hosted by the National Open University of **Nigeria**; the Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education located in the **Botswana** Open University; the Pacific Centre for Flexible and Open Learning for Development at the University of the South Pacific, **Fiji**; and the Commonwealth Centre for Connected Learning in **Malta**.
19. To adapt its programme to the unique needs of each country, COL develops individual Country Action Plans after extensive consultations with Focal Points and partner institutions. These are monitored and updated regularly (<https://www.col.org/about/col-focal-points/>).
20. COL adds strength to its professional network by working with a group of eminent education and development professionals from across the Commonwealth. COL Chairs have been appointed to work in specific research areas related to ODL and OER (<https://www.col.org/about/col-chairs/>).
21. COL is results-oriented and strives to achieve ‘value for money’. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are key components of COL’s Results-Based Management practice.

COL's 'Theory of Change' helps to define the roadmap to achieve its goals. A Risk Management Matrix is reviewed regularly by COL's senior management and Executive and Audit Committees, and annually by its Board of Governors.

Examples of COL's work

Some examples of COL's work at the Pan Commonwealth level and in the four regions over the past year are presented as follows:

Pan Commonwealth

22. COLcommons (<https://colcommons.org/>), the short course platform of COL launched in July 2021 has attracted nearly 22,000 participants. The Commonwealth Digital Education Leadership Training in Action (C-DELTA) platform (<https://cdelta.col.org/>) supporting teachers and students to develop digital education competencies has over 16,000 active users. The C-DELTA platform received Brandon Hall Gold Award in August 2021 under category of Best Advance in Learning Technology Implementation. The COLcommons platform also received three Excellence in Technology Awards in December 2021 from Brandon Hall.
23. COL has offered several massive open online courses (MOOCs) during the period in partnership with leading experts and organisations. In partnership with Athabasca University, Canada, COL has offered three MOOCs on 'Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning', 'Blended Learning Practice' and 'Leading Change in Teaching and Learning for a Digital World' reaching over 5,000 participants. The MOOC on 'Blockchain for Developers' that CEMCA offered in collaboration with Andhra Pradesh Information Technology Academy attracted nearly 6,000 participants from 44 countries.
24. COL partnered with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) to offer a course on implementing ODL for youth and adult literacy. Similarly, COL supported UIL to offer an online course on family and intergenerational literacy.
25. Over 12,763 Commonwealth citizens were trained in skills for employability under the COL-Coursera Workforce Recovery Initiative, and Coursera course enrolments reached 35,160. The COL-Udemy programme, aimed at building skills for employment and entrepreneurship, reaching 86,185 enrolments from **Bangladesh, Barbados, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Kenya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tonga and Trinidad and Tobago**. Like these courses, 'Grow with Google' was offered free and the in-demand skills courses registered 27,041 enrolments.
26. COL initiated the CommonwealthWiseWomen (CWW) project to empower women and girls to achieve their leadership potential and to influence the next generation of leaders. Two cohorts of 25 mentors and 60 mentees from across the Commonwealth participated. A ten-episode video series highlighting the achievements and successes of women leaders across the Commonwealth was developed for the CWW project (<https://www.commonwealthwisewomen.org/>).

27. The GIRLS Inspire initiative has been scaled up to include six more countries: **Malawi, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands** and **Uganda**. To date 8,464 women and girls and 1,268 men and boys have been trained.
28. COL organised a Pan-Commonwealth Training Programme on Women and Leadership with Wawasan Open University, **Malaysia** to promote gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment where 24 mid-career academics from 18 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific participated.

Africa

29. COL supported the Ministry of Basic Education, **Cameroon** to develop the 'ICT in Education Policy and Strategy', which has been adopted by the Ministry.
30. COL supported universities in **Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Lesotho, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania** and **Zambia** to sensitise and develop employability frameworks in higher education.
31. Under Open Schooling, 660 OER in video format have been developed and uploaded on YouTube to increase access to secondary education in **Kenya** and **Tanzania**. The videos were also broadcast by ElimuTV, an African education channel.
32. A strategy for improving school education and teacher training in Seychelles was completed and has been adopted by the Ministry of Education. COL has been supporting governments and educational institutions to adopt OER policy. In **Mauritius**, a national OER policy developed with COL support was finalised. COL supported the **Zambia** Qualifications Authority to integrate employability in the Zambia Qualifications Framework.
33. COL supported the University of **Eswatini** to develop and offer a 4-week online certificate course on Online Teaching.
34. COL supports educational institutions to implement TEL and offer blended learning opportunities. A technology-enabled learning policy was developed at the Nakuru Training Institute, **Kenya** and twenty instructors trained to develop skills courses for blended learning.
35. A series of community mobilisation and sensitisation meetings were held in school communities in northern **Ghana** under COL's 'Parental Learning for Uninterrupted Schooling' project with 4,570 participants.
36. COL's C-DELTA course was implemented in **Seychelles** and **South Africa**, where the course has been accredited as equivalent to 35 continuous personal and professional teacher development points.
37. In **Ghana**, COL's L3F trained 15,518 farmers through mobile learning and other ICT based approaches.
38. COL developed the 'Assistive Technologies for TVET' course in partnership with UNESCO-UNEVOC for **The Gambia** and **Zambia**.

39. In **Malawi**, the Concerned Youth Organisation held awareness meetings to bring girls back to school by reaching 1,384 community members. Furthermore, young women from marginalised communities were trained and mentored to build their capacity to access financial services and employment.
40. Siaya Seed SACCO, **Kenya**, has conducted ongoing sensitisation meetings to train farmers on sustainable farm practices with an emphasis on food security, gender equality and environmental conservation.
41. Partners in **Malawi** and **Tanzania** engaged 253 government officials in policy dialogues relating to gender equality, women's empowerment and the prevention of gender-based violence. Furthermore, COL trained 154 farmers in corporate and financial literacy and six table banking groups where 723 individuals joined the Tanzania Producers Microfinance Public Limited Company as direct shareholders.
42. With COL support the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET), **South Africa** developed a strategy to support the implementation of the Policy Framework for the Realisation of Social Inclusion in the Post-School Education and Training System. This strategy document, the Social Inclusion Review and Improvement Model will be used by the DHET and institutions to measure progress in the implementation of relevant social inclusion initiatives.
43. In collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, **Zambia**, COL developed an L3F extension policy to build the capacity of stakeholders in the livestock sector. The Livestock Development Trust collaborated with the African Women in Animal Resources Livestock Farming and Agribusiness Network Project in Zambia to increase women's capacity to acquire and own livestock.

Asia

44. COL collaborated with the Ministry of Higher Education, **Malaysia** to organise online training for trainers in digital education for 22 universities. COL also assisted six universities in Malaysia to develop a TEL strategy through a benchmarking exercise conducted in the universities.
45. In **Bangladesh**, educational leaders from 20 universities developed institutional OER policies with support from CEMCA.
46. COL supported Digital Empowerment Foundation, **India** to build the digital skills of 2,000 artisans and weavers from marginalised communities. The training used Telegram App and was delivered through a mobile and blended learning approach.
47. COL's partnership with Dhaka Ahsania Mission, **Bangladesh**, strengthened and empowered female garment factory workers by improving their managerial skills. The involvement of three additional factories will help achieve scale and sustainability.
48. A total of 37 content modules were developed by Vidiyal, a community-based organisation in **India**, for a MobiMOOC on ecologically sound agricultural practices. Over 2,359 farmers in India, were trained and linked with financial institutions to receive credit support.

49. CEMCA trained over 500 teachers in five institutions in **India** and **Bangladesh**. Furthermore, CEMCA in partnership with the Domestic Worker Sector Skill Council, **India** developed a course for Infant Care Givers consisting of 22 videos and supported the CSC e-Governance Services India Limited to conduct a free online ‘Optical Fibre Slicer’ course for 2,500 PWD.
50. Partners in **Pakistan** engaged 60 government officials in policy dialogues relating to gender equality, women’s empowerment and the prevention of gender-based violence. Two community advocacy events were also organised by another partner BEDARI, to raise awareness on gender equality and women's empowerment.
51. The Women’s Development Centre in **Sri Lanka** held three entrepreneur network meetings where 78 participants attended and conducted 14 awareness and advocacy sessions for 566 community members on gender-based violence, gender equality, entrepreneurship and the rights of children with disabilities.

Caribbean

52. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, **Belize** organised a 3-week online course in digital education for teachers from 21 schools.
53. In **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**, 53 officials from the Ministry of Education and National Reconciliation enrolled in a course on ‘Design and Development of Online Assessments’ to improve the quality of teaching-learning.
54. A Monitoring & Evaluation course was offered to officials of the Ministry of Education and staff of pilot open schools in **Belize**.
55. The Cyril Porter College of Education, **Guyana** completed a series of online training workshops designed to familiarise them with national standards for approving and accrediting ODL programmes. They developed 26 blended courses with COL support.
56. In **Jamaica**, the Rural Agricultural Development Authority delivered online/blended training in agricultural business management, financial literacy and enterprise development for 61 staff. A Mentors’ Association of Jamaica was launched to provide mentoring to the 113 boys who had registered – 40 have since received entrepreneurship training.

Pacific

57. While augmenting a regional collection of OER for the Pacific that has 250 resources, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, **Fiji**, 41 new learning resources aligned to the national curriculum were added to the National OER Collection, supported by COL and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, **New Zealand**. This is one activity in a multi-year project on Open Distance and Flexible Learning in the Pacific that covers **Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu**.
58. An online course on ‘Digital Skills for OER Sharing’ enrolled 1,581 teachers, mostly from the Pacific region, while a prototype online catalogue for ODL courses in the region was published.

59. A comprehensive online toolkit for TVET educators and policymakers was developed through a consultative process and published. Ten consultative workshops were completed for the upgrade of the ODL Course Catalogue and Online TVET Toolkit with stakeholders from nine Pacific countries.
60. COL supported the University of South Pacific to offer the ‘Diploma in Legislative Drafting’, where 25 participants from **Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Island** and **Vanuatu** registered.
61. COL supported **Tonga** Institute of Higher Education to offer the course on the ‘Introduction to Assistive Technologies’ to 32 persons.

Technology and Knowledge Management

62. COL is recognised as one of the foremost sources of knowledge on open, distance and technology-enabled learning. A wide range of start-up guides, toolkits, research reports and other resources are freely available on COL’s website (<https://www.col.org>). This site was redesigned in October 2021 to provide accessibility functionalities for persons with disabilities.
63. The *Journal of Learning for Development* (JL4D) is an open online scholarly journal which provides a forum for practitioners and academics working in education and international development to share knowledge and experience (<https://jl4d.org/index.php/ejl4d>). The Journal is indexed in several online sources including Scopus, Google Scholar, ERIC, BASE Search Engine, WorldCat, and Directory of Open Access Journals.
64. As a key player in the fast-evolving field of knowledge management, COL continues to develop its internal systems to organise information of its own work and to support partners. COL has an advanced intranet service that facilitates collaboration between internal teams and partners while enabling access to a large repository of professional reports and publications. COL’s institutional repository (<http://oasis.col.org>) contains COL publications from the past 20 years and has about 3,200 entries catalogued.
65. Based on a communications strategy of informing, engaging and inspiring action, COL is present in many online social media services. COL’s formal communications media such as its website and newsletter, *Connections*, are supported by other electronic communications such as broadcast messaging, Facebook, Twitter, online videos and blogs. COL has built an online video content management system from where educational videos can be linked to broadcasting services.
66. Due to COVID-19 lockdowns, many face-to-face training events and meetings had to be moved online. Using readily available technology tools, including webinar and videoconferencing platforms, COL has delivered learning services to partners across the Commonwealth. COL has also pioneered the practice of offering pre-configured learning management platforms on demand to existing partners especially in **Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific**.
67. AptusPi is a low-cost device designed by COL to support educators and learners to connect to digital learning platforms and content without the need for grid electricity or

Internet access. AptusPi continues to be used to deliver curriculum-based OER for open schooling in **Africa and the Caribbean**. A total of 200 devices were made available to Maldives at the request of the Ministry of Education to support learning in schools during lockdown.

Funding

68. COL's core budget comes from voluntary contributions of Commonwealth Member States.
69. COL's financial strategy is based on mobilising resources from two sources of revenue. Voluntary contributions from approximately 45 Commonwealth Member States provide the resources for about 85% of the annual budget. While the seven largest major donors are **Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa and United Kingdom**, COL appreciates the financial support that it receives from all contributing Commonwealth countries. Additional contributions from grants, services and other sources accounts for approximately 15% of total revenue. On the expenditure side, a minimum of 85% of the budget is directed to the programme and the balance to organisational management and governance.
70. To date, 39 countries have contributed during this financial year which ends on June 30, 2022. In the previous fiscal year, COL received financial contributions from 45 countries.

Conclusion

71. COL will continue to support Member States to adopt flexible and blended learning approaches for developing resilient systems that open up access to quality education and skills training. Progress towards achieving the targets of SDG 4 by 2030 is set back because of the pandemic and innovative approaches and models will be required to make up for the learning loss suffered in all Member States.

Going forward, COL will continue to:

- 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 for scale, and in sharing best practices across the Commonwealth;
- iii) support the digital transformation of institutions and organisations;
- iv) develop skills for employment and entrepreneurship; and
- v) promote gender equality.

Further Information

Web: <https://www.col.org/>

Twitter: [@COL4D](https://twitter.com/COL4D)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/COL4D/>

Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/comlearn>

Six-Year Strategic Plan 2021-2027: <http://oasis.col.org/handle/11599/3871> .

Board of Governors: <https://www.col.org/about/current-members-cols-board-governors/>

Staff: <https://www.col.org/about/col-staff/>

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