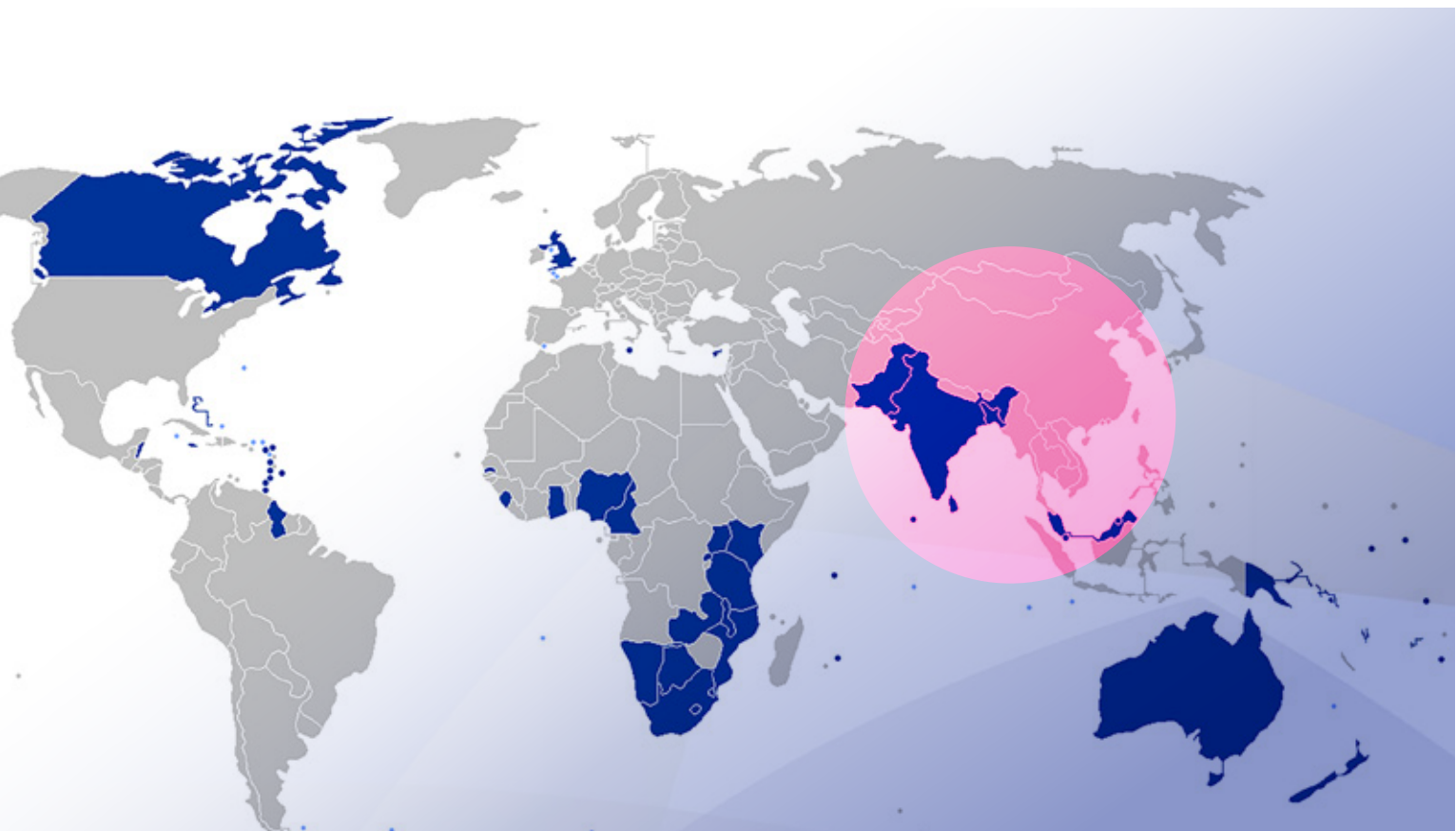




COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING



ASIA

COL in the Commonwealth

INDIA 2015–2018

COL in the Commonwealth

INDIA 2015–2018



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

Acknowledgements

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The following people are thanked especially for their role in the design and publication of *COL in the Commonwealth: 2015–2018 Country Reports*.

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Professor Asha S. Kanwar, President and Chief Executive Officer

Foreword

COL in the Commonwealth: 2015–2018 Country Reports summarises COL’s activities over the last three years (2015–2018), succinctly detailing what we have achieved in each Member State and across the Commonwealth. The reports describe not only COL’s recent activities in developing countries but also how its work supports the international development priorities of partner countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Bearing in mind the launch of a new set of post-2015 development goals, COL transitioned from “Learning for Development” to “Learning for Sustainable Development” to align itself with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG4, which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” Therefore, COL continues to use its expertise in distance education and technology-based approaches to promote lifelong learning that leads to economic growth, social inclusion and environmental conservation.

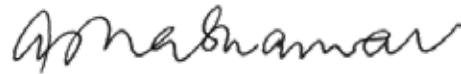
COL in the Commonwealth: 2015–2018 Country Reports begins with a Pan-Commonwealth section, which describes COL’s initiatives under “Education” and “Skills.” This is followed by a section containing a brief report for each region: Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Americas, Europe and the Pacific. The third section details COL’s activities for each country within these regions.

COL’s five core strategies to achieve outcomes and impact are: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy. Focusing on these core strategies, the

reports for this triennium categorise COL’s activities in education, skills, gender, partnerships and special events, to better present how our work contributes to outcomes.

Most of COL’s recent initiatives and projects are already showing demonstrable results in expanding and improving opportunities for education and training, helping rural communities achieve greater prosperity and contributing to skills development.

The production of *COL in the Commonwealth: 2015–2018 Country Reports* was made possible through collective effort and collaboration. Partners on the ground have diligently provided COL with updates. COL staff have tracked and assessed results obtained from partners through a thorough monitoring and evaluation process. COL’s advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to capture information from numerous sources and synthesise this into the reports that make up this volume. I am very grateful to everyone involved for their valuable input.



Professor Asha S. Kanwar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning



370,000+
LEARNERS Reached
(Over **50%** Women)



110+
INSTITUTIONS
Adopted COL Models
and Materials



280+
PARTNERS
in **42** Countries



A++
RATING
by DFID



2,200+
Learning Resources,
Materials and Curricula
Collaboratively Developed

PAN-COMMONWEALTH ACTIVITY

Overview of COL and its activities across the Commonwealth 2015–2018

Located in British Columbia, Canada, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation that serves the education and training needs of the 52 independent states that comprise the Commonwealth and their combined population of 2.4 billion, of whom more than 60 per cent are under the age of 30.

Working collaboratively with governments in all Commonwealth Member States, COL has the mandate to promote the use of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL leverages its impact through a wide range of partnerships that include institutions, national organisations, international development agencies and non-governmental organisations. Partners include the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and UN Women. COL also works with donor agencies such as the World Bank, regional organisations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), national and regional distance education associations, industry, and private sector foundations such as The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

COL's overarching approach — especially its focus, scope and types of specific programmes and projects — is directed by its Strategic Plan, which is reviewed at the mid-term and evaluated at the end of the plan period. COL practises results-based management (RBM) and believes in meticulous planning and continuous monitoring and evaluation. COL's "Theory of Change" model identifies the areas to be addressed and defines its roadmap to achieve selected goals.

COL and the Sustainable Development Goals

In its outcomes-based Strategic Plan 2015–2021, COL articulates its commitment to promoting equitable access to quality lifelong learning for all, believing that access to learning opportunities will lead to progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). COL's theme of promoting "Learning for Sustainable Development" aligns itself with SDG4, a stand-alone goal that aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

The three underlying principles of SDG4 are:

- i. Education is a fundamental human right and an enabling right.
- ii. Education is a public good.
- iii. Gender equality is inextricably linked to the right to education for all.

As a Commonwealth intergovernmental organisation, COL also operates within the framework of the Commonwealth Charter, which lays special emphasis on education, the importance of young people, the needs of small states, and gender equality. All these concerns are integrated in COL's initiatives, projects and services.

COL believes that if the global community is to achieve quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030, it will need to adopt innovative approaches and harness the potential of information and communication technologies (ICT). COL uses this approach in its programmes, which are divided into two sectors, Education and Skills, with Gender as a cross-cutting theme.



Education

The Education sector is working in all regions of the Commonwealth. The stakeholders in this sector range from girls and women in challenging environments to open universities, teacher education institutions and ministries of education. The Education sector is strengthening its comprehensive, project-based approach to achieve systemic impact. There is a strong focus on open educational resources (OER) and the



promotion of gender mainstreaming in all activities. Discussions were initiated with partners to integrate sustainable development approaches into policies and programmes. The GIRLS Inspire project, aimed at preventing child, early and forced marriage and reaching unreached girls and women, is now well established and is having a positive impact on sustainable development.

OPEN/INNOVATIVE SCHOOLING

Overview

While many Commonwealth countries have made tremendous progress in achieving universal primary education, 100% transition from primary to secondary level has not been possible in several others. Lack of teachers, infrastructure and resources contributes to this challenge. Open schooling has emerged as a viable alternative to supplement and complement secondary education. Not only is this more flexible and cost-effective, but open schooling offers both academic and skills-based curricula. COL has been promoting this approach across the Commonwealth.

The new approach to open schooling at COL is more holistic and focuses on the training of teachers in eLearning, using OER, improving the management of open schools and supporting the use of appropriate technologies in teaching and learning. This involves integrating the open schooling approach into mainstream schools to enable many out-of-school youths to access formal education.

Activities

In 2017, the ministries of education in Belize, Mozambique, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu and Zambia signed agreements to integrate open schooling in their education systems. The Open Schooling initiative has also been working with partners to follow up on the outcomes of COL-supported programmes through research studies, and to promote peer auditing for quality assurance. Another important activity is the strengthening of the the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association, through increased member engagement and social media presence.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Overview

The Teacher Education initiative works with governments, teacher education institutions, teachers and other stakeholders to improve the preparation and development of both teachers and teacher educators. The ultimate beneficiary of teacher education efforts is the learner, through better learning outcomes. The initiative is evolving into a comprehensive package, the “Teacher Futures” model, to stimulate holistic development in school-based, in-service teacher training.



Activities

Open Educational Resources for English Language Teaching, the Commonwealth Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration, diagnostic tools for special needs education in the Caribbean, and capacity building for teacher educators were some of the major activities implemented. As a result, more than 500 teachers were trained in East Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Under the new “Teacher Futures” model, major projects have been launched in Kiribati, Nigeria, Seychelles and Sierra Leone.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Overview

The Higher Education initiative works with ministries of education and higher education institutions (HEIs) to increase equitable participation through the adoption of open and distance learning (ODL) policies, systems, models, quality assurance mechanisms and gender-responsive learning resources to address industry and national development needs.

Activities

The Higher Education initiative provides a holistic model to help HEIs to increase access, enhance quality, integrate sustainability and improve the employability of graduates. The model was launched in Namibia and Zambia in 2017. The initiative continues to support the development of quality assurance policies, frameworks and systems at the institutional and national levels, as well as provide capacity building in ODL and materials development. Through this initiative, COL sponsors learners in legislative drafting and online course design programmes.

Additionally, in collaboration with Asia e University, COL organised a high-level round table of vice chancellors of universities in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific to share insights and experiences in leadership, quality, technology and best practices in higher education.

COL is collaborating with ten HEIs across the Commonwealth to offer the Commonwealth Executive Master’s in Business Administration and Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) programmes. At

the end of 2017, the cumulative student enrolment reached 30,000, of which more than 13,000 learners had already graduated.

VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY FOR SMALL STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Overview

Ministers of education directed COL to develop the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) to promote human resource development and strengthen tertiary institutions.



VUSSC is a consortium of 30 Member States that are collaborating to develop and deliver eLearning materials through their tertiary institutions in order to improve access to quality higher education.

Activities

The number of learners enrolled in VUSSC-developed full-time courses and programmes continues to grow, with more than 1,800 learners in 23 institutions in 14 countries. A total of 64 new modules were either developed or adapted from existing OER to increase the number of available courses that participating institutions can use. The Transnational Qualifications Framework supports the mobility of students and qualifications across institutions and discipline areas.



GIRLS INSPIRE

Overview

GIRLS Inspire is a special project supported by the Governments of Australia and Canada. It aims to break the cycle of child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) by increasing access to education and training for girls and women through open, distance and technology-based learning in select Commonwealth countries with a high prevalence of child marriage. It also aims to reach the unreached women and girls in remote rural locations.

Activities

The GIRLS Inspire project has strengthened the organisational capacity of nine partners in Bangladesh, India, Mozambique, Pakistan and Tanzania. The project developed community awareness about the benefits of girls' education and the harmful impact of CEFM and reached about 72,000 community members in over 180 communities and villages. As a result, GIRLS Inspire has delivered 104 life skills and vocational skills training courses and created 237 safe learning environments for over 32,530 female participants, with over 6,029 successfully transitioning to employment and income opportunities. The project contributed to the prevention of child marriages for 447 girls in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Pakistan.

Skills

The Skills sector works to improve learning for livelihoods across all Commonwealth regions. Taking both top-down and bottom-up approaches, initiatives within the Skills sector engage with governments,

educational institutions, civil society and community-based organisations to develop policies, capacities and courses that support employability, entrepreneurship and empowerment. COL's interventions are implemented in both formal and non-formal learning settings by mainstreaming holistic models that demonstrate the pathway along the social value chain from learning to development. Its activities are further strengthened through the "OER for Skills Development" project supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR FARMERS (L3F)

Overview

The L3F initiative aims to establish an ICT/ODL-based system for continuous learning among marginalised farming communities, particularly women, leading to improved knowledge, empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. The model embodies a multidimensional approach to human resource development that holistically integrates social capital, financial capital and human capital to spiral a self-sustaining and self-replicating development process.

Activities

The focus during this triennium has been upscaling L3F to macro institutions and strengthening existing partner initiatives to evolve into self-sustaining



business enterprises, with special attention given to the Pacific and Caribbean regions. L3F created quality learning opportunities for over 370,000 individuals throughout the Commonwealth, leading to higher levels of socio-economic empowerment as well as the ability to run successful business enterprises and practice sustainable farming.

TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING (TEL)

Overview

The TEL initiative aims to encourage more institutions to integrate TEL and OER policies and practices to improve teaching and learning for innovation and skills development. This will enable more governments and organisations to adopt policies and strategies for achieving speed and scale in learning opportunities.

Activities

In co-operation with governments and partner institutions, TEL activities included: the development of national and institutional ICT in education and OER policies/strategies; the development of advanced ICT skills courses for employability; capacity building for course writers and curriculum designers; and implementing TEL in three institutions through a systematic approach of baseline study, policy development, technical advice and capacity building.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (TVSD)

Overview

The TVSD initiative supports partners in all five Commonwealth regions to harness technology so as to increase access to improved quality skills training. COL builds capacity in both formal and non-formal skills training through flexible and blended approaches to achieve quality and scale.

Activities

TVSD has been supporting partners to develop national and institutional open, distance and flexible learning policies, build capacity and support

eLearning course development. The results of these interventions are tracked through tracer studies carried out by partners. New skills training courses have been developed in the African, Caribbean and



Pacific regions, and more learners are gaining access to non-formal courses. To date, 557 teachers are integrating technology in their practice, and more than 41,000 learners across the Commonwealth have been reached. Training resources for the integration of sustainable development in technical/vocational education and training have been developed.

OER FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Overview

OER constitute a key priority in COL's Strategic Plan. COL has been actively working with UNESCO and like-minded organisations to implement the ten recommendations from the 2012 Paris OER Declaration. The long-term vision is that more institutions/organisations within the Commonwealth will develop and use OER-based courses and materials to give their citizens access to quality education and training for sustainable livelihoods. With additional funding from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, COL has strengthened its leadership in OER in this triennium through this project.

Activities

The activities this year focused on OER policy development/implementation, capacity building and OER course development. Nine provincial OER policies were developed during a national workshop in Sri Lanka, and 20 provincial OER guidelines were developed for provinces in Botswana and Cameroon.



Activities have resulted in 649 policy makers being sensitised to OER, and 17 OER-based skills courses that were developed by partners. Moreover, the initiative has been supporting the development of OER courses in life skills and non-formal/informal OER learning materials for farming communities.

Gender

Overview

Gender as a cross-cutting theme aims to harness the potential of ODL to expand access to education and improve learning outcomes for girls/women and boys/men by integrating a gender perspective into ODL practice and delivery. The cross-cutting activities of the initiative focus on building capacity for gender mainstreaming among partners in both formal and non-formal education. COL has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UN Women and is working with international partners to develop and implement holistic programmes aimed at addressing issues such as women's empowerment and boys' underperformance.

Activities

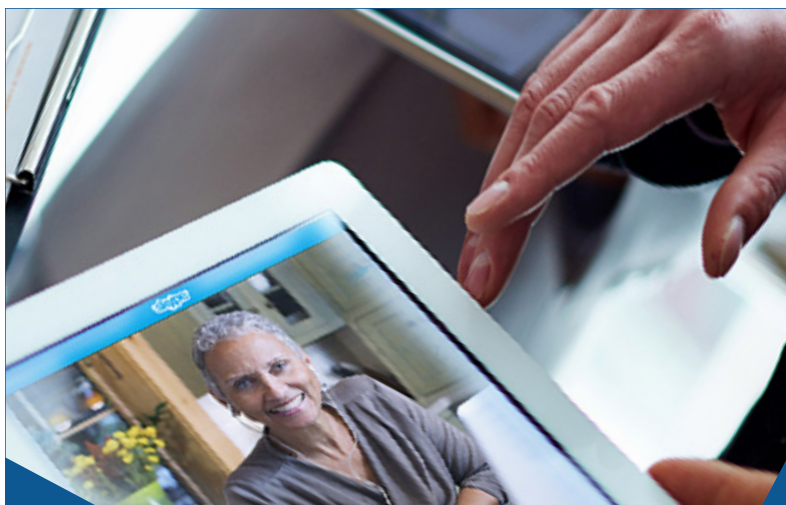
Emphasis was placed on assisting partner institutions with identifying gender gaps and finding ways to address these gaps, using COL's Institutional Gender Scorecard as the key tool for driving this process. Partners were also supported to develop gender-responsive policies and strategies for mainstreaming gender. A Commonwealth-wide study on the current situation of boys' underperformance was completed, and a new model to address the specific challenges and learning needs of at-risk boys was developed. A study was completed on the role of gender in co-operatives.

Services

ELEARNING FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (ELIO)

Overview

eLIO provides online professional development courses to international organisations on a fee-for-service basis. eLIO has been customising and providing award-winning eLearning since 2006 to organisations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the World Bank and the World Health Organization, among others. This triennium, eLIO expanded its role by developing and offering its own courses and by pursuing externally funded projects.



Activities

eLIO implemented its new Essential Skills for International Organisations programme. The first six courses were adapted from COL OER and were successfully marketed to the World Bank. Course delivery for international organisations resulted in a record number of 1,707 learners in 31 cohorts with a completion rate of more than 80%. COL entered into an agreement with



Women Deliver, an international NGO, to create an online version of its Young Leaders programme and to develop a massive open online course (MOOC) for its Deliver for Good campaign.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY (KM&T)

Overview

The KM&T team supports COL programmes with innovations in mobile and learning technologies. Aptus is a multipurpose micro-server designed to enable access to digital learning materials of all kinds, even when connectivity to power or data networks is minimal or non-existent. It was developed at COL as a prototype of open-source hardware. Its current configuration supports the delivery of digital video streams to about 20 users simultaneously and can host a Moodle service as well. KM&T also supports a MOOC management system for institutions in developing countries, as well as MOOCs for the food and agriculture sector.

Activities

Aptus was deployed by a team of researchers at the National University of Samoa to test for ease of use and overall learning experience. Results showed that it was rated very highly for both aspects. A more powerful version of Aptus was developed and has been deployed in Open Schooling and GIRLS Inspire activities in Mozambique as well as Trinidad and Tobago. Through the portal MOOC4DEV, institutions in Malta and Nigeria were supported to offer courses. MOOCs in agriculture, offered in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK), attracted over 13,000 learners from 62 countries, and a trial MOOC for senior secondary students had an enrolment of 54,150 learners. COL also facilitated a partnership between India and Seychelles for training in MOOCs and ICT.

Regional Centres

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA

Overview

In response to needs expressed by the Commonwealth countries of the Asian region for more effective utilisation of educational media resources, COL established the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) in New Delhi. CEMCA works to devise



appropriate learning solutions that maintain a balance between the aspirations of its diverse stakeholders and available resources. It works in education and skills development, with a special focus on community media, particularly community radio.

Activities

CEMCA worked with 46 institutions in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to improve the capacity to leverage ODL for increased access to learning. It helped HEIs in two countries to adopt OER and ODL policies. Similarly, technical and vocational institutions were supported to enhance their capacity to reach large numbers of learners through ICT and ODL. Stakeholders in community radio stations were trained in developing audio content related to women's health and nutrition. CEMCA supported India's Ministry of Human Resource Development to generate a discussion paper on OER policy.

REGIONAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR DISTANCE AND OPEN LEARNING

Overview

In partnership with the National Open University of Nigeria, COL promotes ODL capacity building by supporting the Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL), in West Africa. The RETRIDOL mandate includes engaging in and supporting ODL research activities, as well as ODL capacity building, while serving as a centre of expertise for Nigeria and West Africa.

Activities

RETRIDOL has conducted training in online facilitation and tutoring, as well as policy formulation for dual-mode universities. Its work plan was revised to strengthen ODL in dual-mode universities in West Africa, in alignment with COL's higher education model. Several workshops aimed at supporting dual-mode institutions were held.



SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY – CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

Overview

The Southern African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) is supported by the Botswana Ministry of Education and hosted by the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (now Botswana Open University). The centre was established to increase the provision of quality distance education in Southern Africa, support research and undertake and promote training and development in ODL.

Activities

SADC-CDE has been engaged in various capacity-building activities, including an online project management course and a Master of Education course through the Open University of Tanzania. SADC-CDE presented its draft strategic plan to COL and has launched courses on monitoring and evaluation and on eLearning. An online course on project management was completed by ODL practitioners from Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. A new multilingual website with the three SADC languages (English, French and Portuguese) was launched. Through COL's technical assistance, the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning made a smooth transition to becoming the Botswana Open University, effective 1 December 2017.

PACIFIC CENTRE FOR OPEN AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Overview

The Pacific Centre for Open and Flexible Learning for Development (PACFOLD) is hosted by the University of the South Pacific (USP) and is a “network of networks” to empower Pacific communities through lifelong learning. The centre’s priorities include advocacy and capacity building for flexible and open learning for sustainable development, as well as the development of national and regional ODL policies.

Activities

During the 8th Pan-Commonwealth Forum, stakeholders from the Pacific region discussed strategies to strengthen the role of PACFOLD in achieving learning for sustainable development. PACFOLD Learn, an online community for strengthening flexible and open learning, was launched. PACFOLD participated in several forums organised by the National University of Samoa, USP and the Matuaileoo Environment Trust Inc., a non-profit organisation in Samoa. An action plan for 2017 was also developed. PACFOLD launched an online course on flexible skills development, with 266 teachers from seven Pacific Commonwealth countries.

COMMONWEALTH CENTRE OF CONNECTED LEARNING

Overview

COL serves in an advisory capacity on the International Advisory Board of the Commonwealth Centre of Connected Learning (CCCL), a Maltese foundation created in 2017, which facilitates connected learning in Commonwealth and European member states. This purpose resonates with COL’s interest in technology-enabled and connected learning.

Activities

CCCL facilitated the development of an open access policy for the University of Malta that was formally approved in September 2017. The International Advisory Board (IAB) of CCCL, which is chaired by COL’s President and CEO, held its first meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Malta’s Minister for Education and Employment participated in the meeting as a special invitee. The IAB gave specific advice to CCCL in programme matters, the mobilisation of financial resources and the development of strategic partnerships.





The Commonwealth of Learning



ASIA REGION

The Asia region of the Commonwealth is the most populous, with approximately 1.72 billion people. Among the seven Member States across South and East Asia, India has the largest population, with about 1.3 billion in 2017, while Brunei Darussalam has the smallest, with about 430,000. The populations in the other five countries are in the millions.

The region has shown promising economic growth with increases in GDP ranging from five to seven per cent. The Asian Development Bank argues that innovation, human capital and infrastructure are the three pillars that will sustain growth and help translate it into development (<https://www.adb.org/publications/asian-development-outlook-2017-middle-income-challenge>). These three pillars require strong education, learning and training systems.

Asia has made rapid progress in primary, secondary and tertiary education during the last three decades. However, globalisation, increasing population and dynamic changes in markets and technology have necessitated a much stronger emphasis on quality primary, secondary and higher education as well as skills development at both speed and scale. Non-formal education is also crucial since large numbers of people are in agriculture and the rural economy.

COL focuses on adding value to countries' efforts towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG4. It supports the Commonwealth governments and institutions in Asia in the use of appropriate, affordable and accessible technologies to improve and expand learning for sustainable development. Its initiatives in formal education includes an emphasis on inclusive quality secondary and higher education and the strengthening of teacher development programmes. In the area of skills, COL supports the expansion of access to technical and vocational education, the reinforcement of non-formal

education in agriculture, and technology-enabled learning. These initiatives have been designed to achieve socially inclusive and gender-sensitive human resource development at lower economic and environmental costs.

COL's major regional initiatives in the Asian Commonwealth countries between 2015 and 2018 are outlined below.

- Based in New Delhi, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) promotes the meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of media and technology to serve the education and training needs of the Commonwealth Member States of Asia. CEMCA works in education and skills development, with a focus on community media, particularly community radio. Through activities with partners in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, CEMCA has helped institutions improve their capacity to leverage open and distance learning (ODL) for increased access to education.
- COL's Technology-Enabled Learning initiative encourages institutions to integrate technology-enabled learning and open educational resources (OER) practices to improve teaching and learning for innovation and skills development. As part of the Advanced ICT Skills Development project, Indira Gandhi National Open University is working with five other open universities in Africa and Asia to develop courses in web application development and mobile application development.
- Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) supports the economic improvement of small-scale farmers, who are primarily women. L3F focuses on the economic and social inclusion of farmers, training them in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and assisting them in

gaining entrepreneurial skills. The L3F initiative links the capacity building of farming communities, particularly women, to social and financial capital through the use of ODL and flexible and blended learning. L3F has a network of partners across India and Sri Lanka.

- GIRLS Inspire is a project that provides vulnerable and hard-to-reach women and girls with opportunities to complete their schooling and receive skills training that will enable them to have sustainable livelihoods. The initiative, which in the Asia region works in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, aims to end child, early and forced marriage in rural communities and addresses other barriers that prevent girls' full participation in society.
- The Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration and Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) programmes are the outcome of collaboration between COL and four open universities in South Asia: Allama Iqbal Open University (Pakistan), Bangladesh Open University, Indira Gandhi National Open University (India) and the Open University of Sri Lanka. The flexible and modular CEMBA/CEMPA programmes are geared towards delivering high-quality learning and professional development opportunities in participating countries.
- Supported by COL, the Open University of Malaysia (OUM) has been working with five other open universities in Africa and Asia to develop courses related to web applications and mobile application development.
- COL's Open/Innovative Schooling initiative has been supporting the National Institute of Open Schooling (India) and the Open School of

Bangladesh Open University to develop an institutional peer-to-peer-review initiative between the two institutions.





- COL's Gender initiative has been supporting partner institutions in the Asian region to implement the Institutional Scorecard for Gender Mainstreaming.
- COL and Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a workshop to build the capacity of teacher educators and education practitioners in the use of ICT to improve teaching and learning. This annual initiative, under the Singapore Cooperation Programme, was held in Singapore in August 2017 and hosted 18 participants from ten Commonwealth countries.
- The Asia Regional OER Consultation, which provided opportunities for Asian delegates to learn more about OER and contribute to the 2nd World OER Congress, was held in December 2016.
- The 8th Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF8) on Open Learning was organised with the OUM in Kuala Lumpur in November 2016. Under the theme "Open, Online and Flexible Learning: The Key to Sustainable Development," PCF8 brought together the best minds in ODL to discuss issues of common interest, exchange ideas and explore best practices. One outcome of the conference was the 2016 Kuala Lumpur Declaration, a set of recommendations for policy makers and practitioners.






India

Key Facts

-  Joined Commonwealth: **1947**
-  Population: **1,252,140,000** (2013)
-  Primary enrolment: **93%** (2011)
- GDP: **4.7%** p.a. 1990–2013
- UN HDI world ranking: **135**
-  Official languages: **Hindi, English**
- Currency: **Indian rupee**

Geography

-  Area: **3,287,263 sq km**
-  Coastline: **7,520 km**
-  Capital city: **New Delhi**
- Population density (per sq km): **381**

Public spending on education was 3.4 per cent of GDP in 2012. There are nine years of compulsory education, starting at age six. Primary school comprises five years and secondary seven, the latter having cycles of three and four years. The school year starts in April.

There are: some 44 “central” universities, under the Department of Higher Education in the Ministry of Human Resource Development; 345 state universities, under the state governments, the three oldest of which — the universities of Calcutta, Madras and Mumbai — date back to 1857; 100 institutions of national importance recognised and granted autonomous status by the Department of Higher Education; and 233 private universities (2017). The gender parity index in higher education is 0.94 (2017). Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 86.14 per cent (2014).

SOURCE: <http://thecommonwealth.org/member-countries>

COL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Mr K. K. Sharma, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), represents India on the COL Board of Governors.

COL FOCAL POINT

Mr Madhu Ranjan Kumar, Joint Secretary (DL, BP & A), Department of Higher Education, MHRD, is the COL Focal Point.

NOTABLE MENTION

Mr R. P. Agrawal is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

The late Mr Sudeep K. Banerjee was a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Mr B. S. Baswan is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Mr B. K. Chaturvedi is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Ms Vibha Puri Das is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Mr P. R. Dasgupta is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Mr M. K. Kaw is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Dr Abdul Waheed Khan is a COL Honorary Fellow.

Professor Badri Nath Koul is a COL Honorary Fellow.

Father T. V. Kunnunkal is a COL Honorary Fellow.

Mr Mahesh Chandra Pant is a COL Honorary Fellow.

Professor Vasireddy Sivalinga Prasad is a COL Honorary Fellow.

The late Professor G. Ram Reddy was a member of COL’s Founding Board of Governors.

Mr Abhimanyu Singh is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Ms Chetna Vijay Sinha is a COL Honorary Fellow.

The late Professor V. C. Kulandai Swamy was a COL Honorary Fellow.

Professor Ram G. Takwale is a COL Honorary Fellow.

Mr Ashok Thakur is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Mr S. C. Tripathi is a former member of the COL Board of Governors.

Strategic Plan 2015–2021

As outlined in COL's Strategic Plan 2015–2021, COL works in two sectors – Education and Skills – with Gender as a cross-cutting theme. COL has identified five core strategies to achieve outcomes and impact: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy. In practice, most COL activities incorporate more than one of these strategies – in some cases, all five.

COL's work in India is primarily in the areas of higher education, teacher education, technical and vocational skills development, technology-enabled learning, Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F), open schooling and girls' education. India is also home to the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA).

Education

OPEN/INNOVATIVE SCHOOLING

Open/innovative schooling is a supplementary or complementary model of schooling that uses a range of flexible approaches based on open and distance learning (ODL) to provide structured teaching and learning opportunities. It focuses on training teachers in eLearning, using open educational resources (OER) and improving the management of open schools, as well as supporting the use of appropriate technologies in teaching and learning. In this triennium, COL initiated and supported a workshop hosted by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for senior staff of NIOS and Bangladesh Open University's Open School to develop quality criteria and plan

for peer-to-peer quality audits between the two institutions.

In January 2018, Ms Anshul Kharbanda, Academic Officer: Accountancy, NIOS, joined COL as an intern for three months to study best practices in open schooling around the Commonwealth and propose a plan of action for further collaboration between COL and NIOS.

TEACHER EDUCATION

COL's Teacher Education initiative aims to improve the capacity of partner countries to deliver quality learning opportunities for sustainable development through innovative school-based, technology-supported teacher professional development programmes. Under its flagship programme, Teacher Futures, COL works with teacher education institutions, teachers and teacher communities towards scalable national and cross-national teacher development models for improved learning outcomes.

COL is working with the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE) in India on the use and development of OER materials for the Green Teacher Programme, which promotes sustainable development education in schools and teacher education institutions. The resources are being used by teachers and teacher educators to inculcate environmental concerns in children from the early stages. The CEE has provided expertise for the development of the Green Teacher Programme in Nigeria.

COL's Director: Technology and Knowledge Management served as a resource person in a workshop on deploying massive open online courses (MOOCs) for science education for teachers. The workshop, which was organised by the National Programme on Technology Enabled Learning (NPTEL) in Chennai, India, was held in September 2015 to develop a pool of trainers and content creators using available OER.

IT For Change, Bangalore completed *Creating and Repurposing OER Using FOSS: A How-To Guide for Teachers and Learners* with COL support. This toolkit provides activities on how to reuse and remix OER that are in text, audio, video and image formats. Teachers are introduced to free open source software (FOSS) for remixing media types.

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR FARMERS

COL's L3F initiative empowers farming communities using ODL and flexible and blended learning. In India, the L3F initiative is working in partnership with four organisations to build capacity among farmers (mostly women) in skills and financial literacy. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development partnered with COL and encouraged cooperative banks to adopt the L3F model.

In the state of Tamil Nadu, 1,114 L3F participants, of whom 80 per cent were women, received credit amounting to USD 800,000 after undergoing financial literacy training. In addition, COL's emphasis on technology-enabled learning (TEL) has helped to connect more than 4,900 farmers in Tamil Nadu and enabled them to share their experiences through social media. A study in India found that the profit efficiency of L3F farmers is nine times higher than that of non-L3F farmers.

COL's L3F partners in India — Vidiyal, the Mann Deshi Foundation, Arul Anandar College (AAC) and the Reddiyarchadtram Seed Growers Association (RSGA) — reached a total of 29,628 new learners. At the Mann Deshi Foundation, the COL-developed Aptus device was a very effective tool in farmer education. A weekly average of 1,719 women vendors interacted with the Aptus device to transact over USD 525,000 in credit.

Also, following Vidiyal's successful advocacy, 15 organisations adopted L3F. Vidiyal helped improve the capacity of these new organisations to integrate L3F strategies in their policies and programmes and to produce learning materials. RSGA is facilitating credit-based learning programmes with the active participation and support of 14 additional organisations. The Farmers' Producer Company, formed by L3F women, has established a meat shop utilising an equity grant received from the Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium. The L3F initiative has continued to strengthen women's capacity via voicemail messages, supporting the continuous training they receive in goat rearing, business management and corporate literacy.

AAC initiated a Certificate Course on Multimedia for Lifelong Learning and ODL, in which 25 students

were enrolled. Using theory, lab-based and field-based approaches, the programme equipped learners with the necessary skills and expertise. AAC also trained staff and other L3F non-governmental organisations in multimedia-based ODL content development. COL's Education Specialist conducted an assessment of the L3F project by AAC and discussed strategies for the college to lead other tertiary institutions in integrating L3F in their academic programmes.

COL supported a three-day capacity-building workshop for the L3F community in Chennai to help them convert text, video, images and voice messages to OER so as to make a difference in the non-formal/informal education sector, using their OER repository, called L3F Pedia, a central location for farming information. In the workshop participants developed three draft OER policies and planned ways to make content more accessible to the farming community through OER and technology.

The three partner organisations — AAC, RSGA and Vidiyal — conducted an extensive needs analysis among farming communities to identify the skills gaps to be addressed; this resulted in the identification of 50 critical skills areas. Based on these areas, the partners have developed 150 OER-based learning objects in the native Tamil language using multimedia techniques. The use of multimedia to create this content in a native language helps illiterate farmers to follow the content easily.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Technical and Vocational Skills Development initiative supports partners in harnessing technology to increase access to improved quality skills training. A key aspect of the programme is the capacity building of partner organisations in course design and materials development. In India, COL works with several institutions focusing on skills training for women in order to integrate them into the workforce. COL supported the State Resource Centre (SRC) in Kerala, India to develop a Certificate in Community Development by distance learning to build the capacity and capability of community development workers. Thus far, they have enrolled more than 350 *preraks* in the programme. In 2017, COL conducted training on OER and Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning, with the SRC, in preparation for a tracer study. The

SRC team has continued to develop new programmes with the distance learning model and has more than 2,600 learners.

TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING

COL's TEL initiative encourages institutions to integrate TEL and OER practices to improve teaching and learning for innovation and skills development. As part of the Advanced ICT Skills Development project, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is working with five other open universities in Africa and Asia to create courses in web and mobile application development. IGNOU completed two courses: i) Introduction to Mobile Architecture and ii) introduction to Windows and iOS. COL also recently developed and presented a draft policy on OER for higher education to India's MHRD.

COL facilitated the formation of a consortium of well-known institutions to offer MOOCs in agriculture (agMOOCs). Thus far, the consortium has offered five courses. Topics include entrepreneurship, the agriculture value chain, and integrated pest management. They are offered via the mookIT platform, designed by the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur.

COL's Education Specialist: eLearning conducted one workshop each at the SNTD Women's University, Mumbai, and IGNOU, New Delhi, in April 2016. The SNTD Women's University developed and adopted a TEL policy based on COL's intervention. COL's Director: Technology and Knowledge Management was a key resource person in a major review of agMOOCs and facilitated discussions at the workshop, held in May 2016.

Two workshops — on Course Development for the Diploma in Animation and Multimedia, held at Odisha State Open University (OSOU) in November 2016, and on Course Development in Media-Related Areas, at Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM), conducted in September–October 2016 — provided capacity building for the development of nine skills-development courses. OSOU organised a review workshop in July 2017 to finalise the Diploma in Animation and Multimedia course. In January 2018, OSOU announced the launch of the programme.

CUTM organised a two-day review workshop in March 2017 for finalising the learning materials (print and videos) for the four vocational courses

being developed at the university. COL conducted a baseline study and organised a two-day policy development workshop on TEL at the Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (RGUKT) in March 2017. The draft policy was handed over to the university for comments and further approval. COL also organised a capacity-building workshop at RGUKT in Nuzvid, Andhra Pradesh, India in June 2017 on the development of blended learning courses using the Moodle learning management system, as part of the implementation of the TEL policy. COL organised a workshop on Blended Course Development Using Moodle, at RGUKT in November 2017. This workshop was a follow-up on TEL policy implementation at RGUKT, where teachers were developing blended courses using Moodle to offer these in the semester beginning January 2018. Twenty courses are being offered, to about 3,500 learners.

Introduction to Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL), a MOOC for teachers in secondary, post-secondary and vocational education developed in partnership with Athabasca University, Canada, was offered in January–February 2017 and November–December 2017. Significantly, 476 teachers from India participated in both cohorts of this TEL MOOC.

Gender

Gender is a cross-cutting theme in all of COL's work. COL aims to harness the potential of ODL to expand access to education and improve learning outcomes for girls and women, as well as boys and men, by integrating a gender perspective into ODL practice and delivery. The focus is on building capacity for gender mainstreaming among partners in both formal and non-formal education.

GIRLS INSPIRE

GIRLS Inspire is a partnership between COL and community organisations in Bangladesh, India, Mozambique, Pakistan and Tanzania to address the barriers keeping girls and women from full participation in society. Because girls are critical agents for social change and global development, closing the gender gap in education, economic activity and health during adolescence will significantly increase national economic growth and well-being. But barriers such

as child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), distance to school, security concerns, cultural values and the costs of schooling all prevent girls and women from participating in educational opportunities. Thanks to a grant from the Government of Australia, COL is using ODL and technology to support the schooling and skills training of girls and women in India. These efforts are crucial to India accelerating progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

GIRLS Inspire partnered with the Mann Deshi Foundation, which is dedicated to empowering female entrepreneurs and their communities. The project enabled them to expand their reach to more girls and women. The Mann Deshi Foundation created mobile training centres using two buses equipped with self-learning materials, laptops and vocational training equipment. In addition, 41 gender-sensitive courses were developed on life skills and vocational skills, and delivered face-to-face and via community radio. In total, 6,033 girls across 150 villages were trained in at least three subjects each.

Community workshops on girls' education, gender equality, health and hygiene, and the impact of child marriage built trust between the communities and the project. Participants included nurses, Accredited Social Health Activists, mayors, village workers, advocates, doctors and teachers. Tablets and multimedia presentations facilitated the sharing of previous work and successes in other villages. A strong storytelling approach was used, which led to greater buy-in from parents and husbands. The Mann Deshi Foundation's radio station reaches 170,000 householders across 104 villages in Maharashtra, in their local dialects. The team developed radio content on health skills and financial literacy and produced 14 modules on various topics, such as income and expenditure, savings, banking, the importance of education, loan repayment, HIV/AIDS and child marriage. Based on a sample from 31 villages, the community radio programme reached an estimated 42,798 people in 31 villages alone, at least 4,000 of whom were girls and women.

After their life skills and vocational training, 312 girls were in income-generating opportunities as interns, employees or entrepreneurs as part of this project. Learning financial management and having access to banking was critical to their sustained success and

economic independence. By the end of the project, 490 girls and women had opened bank accounts.

Regional Centre

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA (CEMCA)

Based in New Delhi, CEMCA promotes the meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of media and technology to serve the education and training needs of the Commonwealth Member States of Asia. Over the years, CEMCA has widened its scope to embrace emerging educational technologies so as to cover formal, non-formal and informal learning at all levels. CEMCA fully aligns itself with COL programmes while retaining its regional focus.

CEMCA has trained 90 faculty members from the Central University of Hyderabad, Netaji Subhas Open University and Uttarakhand Open University in e-content development. Twenty content writers and editors received training to develop materials using OER for a professional development course titled "Inclusive Education" at Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU). CEMCA so far has assisted the following universities in India with developing institutional OER policies:

- Central University of Himachal Pradesh
- Netaji Subhas Open University
- Odisha Open University
- Uttarakhand Open University

In December 2015, a report on the status of state open universities in India formed the background document for a meeting of vice chancellors from these institutions and discussed the theme of "Reforming ODL in India." CEMCA convened a meeting of the vice chancellors of state open universities in collaboration with MHRD to discuss the implementation of OER policy and development and the sharing of OER. CEMCA also facilitated a national consultation workshop for OER policy in March 2017 and with COL support submitted to MHRD a draft national OER policy for higher education.

CEMCA supported capacity building for teachers at the Central University of Punjab in e-content

development using Moodle. With COL support, Uttarakhand Open University developed learning materials for the Post-Graduate Diploma in Cyber Security and released them as OER.

CEMCA helped Telangana State to develop an OER policy, which has been submitted to the state government for final approval. CEMCA is assisting Telangana state to implement the Government of India's ICT@ School initiative. As part of this, a secondary-level ICT course was developed as a teacher handbook.

Under CEMCA's Life Skills for Engineers initiative and in collaboration with COL and the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, 19 faculty members were trained in December 2017 in the effective use and management of the mookIT platform to deliver MOOCs.

A toolkit for career guidance based on job roles identified by the National Skill Development Corporation, India was developed and field tested with 230 girls in secondary schools. This programme, supported by the IKEA Foundation and UNDP, aims to equip girls for financial independence through employment and entrepreneurship. The University of Kashmir in collaboration with CEMCA has launched a skills development programme for 250 youths, mostly women. CEMCA supported capacity building for 790 vocational trainers in activity-based learning and 418 students in generic employability skills.

Under the Science for Women's Health and Nutrition project supported by the Department of Science and Technology, CEMCA conducted a baseline survey of five community radio stations, in which 5,000 women were surveyed, and CEMCA helped these radio stations to produce 50 sample programmes.

CEMCA carried out several capacity-building activities on OER for teachers at the BOSCH Vocational Centre, Bengaluru.

Partnerships

Partnerships are fundamental to COL's work. Strategic partnerships allow COL to broaden its reach and engage at global, regional and national levels, while implementation partners support COL's work in communities and institutions across Commonwealth Member States. Partners include multilateral organisations, regional bodies, national governments,

government agencies, foundations, civil society organisations, public and private (not-for-profit) institutions and the private sector.

COL's partners in India include:

- Arul Anandar College
- Australian Skill Development Education Pvt. Ltd
- Bilaspur University
- BOSCH Limited
- Central University of Himachal Pradesh
- Centurion University of Technology and Management
- Chetana Institute for the Mentally Handicapped
- Department of School Education, Telangana
- Department of Science and Technology, Government of India
- Digital Empowerment Foundation
- First Impressions Resources Pvt Ltd
- Foundation for MSME Clusters
- Gopalganj-Debiana Fisherman Cooperative Society Limited
- Graphic Era Hill University
- Indian Institute of Skill Development
- Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
- Indira Gandhi National Open University
- International College, Kolkata
- IT for Change, Bangalore
- Karnataka State Open University
- Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University
- M.S Swaminathan Research Foundation
- Educational Technology and Management Academy
- Mann Deshi Foundation
- Ministry of Human Resource Development
- National Institute of Open Schooling
- Netaji Subhas Open University
- Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society
- Odisha State Open University
- Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies

- Reddiar Chatram Seed Growers Association
- Save the Children
- Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University
- Siliguri Global Engineering Institute
- Skill Council for Green Jobs
- State Resource Center, Kerala
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- The Energy and Resources Institute
- United Nations Development Programme
- University of Hyderabad
- University of Kashmir
- Uttarakhand Open University
- Vidiyal

Special Events

2ND WORLD OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CONGRESS

COL organised six Regional Consultations on OER leading up to the 2nd World Open Educational Resources Congress, hosted by the Government of Slovenia in Ljubljana in partnership with UNESCO and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The Ljubljana OER Action Plan 2017 provides recommendations to stakeholders in five strategic areas: building the capacity of users to find, reuse, create and share OER; language and cultural issues; ensuring inclusive and equitable access to quality OER; developing sustainability models; and developing supportive policy environments.

The Asian Regional Consultation was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 2016. Dr B. K. Bhadri, Assistant Educational Adviser, MHRD, and Dr Mangala Sunder Krishnan, Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, attended.

8TH PAN-COMMONWEALTH FORUM ON OPEN LEARNING (PCF8)

Under the theme “Open, Online and Flexible Learning: The Key to Sustainable Development,” PCF8 brought together the best minds in ODL to discuss issues of common interest, exchange ideas and explore best practices, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November 2016.

A key outcome of PCF8 was the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, which presents a set of ten recommendations for governments, institutions, the private sector and civil society related to lifelong learning, access and equity, teacher education, OER and quality. It will be brought to the 20th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting for further consideration and implementation.

The Indian delegation to PCF8 comprised Ms Chetna Sinha, Mr Indrajit Banerjee, Ms Namrata Chandramohan Bali, Ms Phalachandra Bhandigadi, Mr Swaraj Chellappan Asari, Mr Kuntal De, Ms Anita Devraj, Mr Mohammed Zahed Ali Farooqui, Mr Ashok Gaba, Mr Vijaya Lakshmi, Ms Naga Sai Ravi Mula, Mr Pooja Murada, Mr Ferindand Peter, Mr Tadinada Venkata Prabhakar, Mr Arallimarad Prabhuraj, Mr Satish Rastogi, Ms Vanita Shinde, Ms Jayashree Shinde, Mr R. Sreedher, Mr Mangala Sunder Krishnan, Mr Venkata Suresh Pachigolla, Mr Thamizoli Perumal, Mr K. T. Revathy, Mr Ujjwala Tripti Turkey, Mr B. K. Bhadri, Mr Sukanta Kumar Mahapatra, Mr S. K. Prasad, Ms Anita Ranjan Rout, Mr Chandra Bhushran Sharma, Mr Manoj Kumar Thakur, Mr Anil Kumar and Ms Padmaja Pancharatnam.

India hosted PCF6 in 2010.

Looking Ahead: 2021

COL is committed to promoting equitable access to quality lifelong learning for all – believing, in effect, that access to learning opportunities will lead to progress in achieving:

- improved sustainable livelihoods;
- increased and equitable access to and use of quality learning opportunities; and
- improved organisational capacity to leverage ODL.

COL looks forward to working with India to address its specific challenges while also supporting broader efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and provide Commonwealth citizens with greater access to quality education and training through open, distance and technology-enabled learning.

Publications and Resources

COL has issued a number of publications and resources over the past three years, including the following:

Gender Profile: India is part of a series that provides country-specific compilations of gender-related data for a number of indicators, including health, education, economic participation and more.

Institutional Scorecard for Gender Mainstreaming is a self-assessment tool that can help with ongoing audits of an organisation's policies and strategies to promote a gender-balanced workplace culture. This comprehensive and systematic tool can be used by all institutions to develop or improve their gender-responsive policies and mechanisms.

Making Sense of MOOCs: A Guide for Policy-Makers in Developing Countries is a COL–UNESCO publication designed to raise the general awareness of policy makers in developing countries of how MOOCs might address their concerns and priorities, particularly in terms of access to affordable quality higher education and the preparation of secondary school leavers for academic as well as vocational education and training.

Measuring Empowerment Toolkit: Using the Commonwealth of Learning's Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework is a practical toolkit intended for development practitioners, government officials, academics, monitoring and evaluation specialists, and researchers who are interested in measuring empowerment. It enables practitioners to develop context-appropriate survey instruments to measure empowerment based on COL's Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework.

Open Educational Resources: Global Report 2017, published by COL in 2017 in preparation for the 2nd World OER Congress, provides state-of-the-art information in the field of OER globally by analysing the responses of representatives of 102 governments and over 600 stakeholders. This authoritative source on the status of OER in the world was produced with the support of The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The report focuses on mainstreaming OER to achieve SDG4.

Open Educational Resources (OER) Guide for Students in Post-Secondary and Higher Education was published in 2016 as a guide, particularly for students in small states of the Commonwealth, to evaluating and using OER.

Open Educational Resources in the Commonwealth 2016 is the result of a study conducted as part of COL's OER for Skills Development project, supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The objective of the study was to collect baseline data from Commonwealth institutions with respect to the development, use and reuse of OER.

Open Educational Resources: Policy, Costs and Transformation, published with UNESCO in 2016, presents 15 case studies contributed by 29 OER researchers and policy makers from 15 countries across six continents and examines the implementation of the 2012 OER Paris Declaration through the thematic lenses of policy, costs and transformation.

Reaching the Unreached through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan is the final report to Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on the work that has taken place in the Reaching the Unreached Project since January 2016.

The State of Open Universities in the Commonwealth: A Perspective on Performance, Competition and Innovation critically examines specialist ODL universities in the Commonwealth.

Using ICTs and Blended Learning in Transforming TVET (in the Perspectives on Open and Distance Learning series) is a COL-UNESCO 2017 publication presenting a series of case studies from around the world that highlight the use and role of ICT in the transformation of technical and vocational education and training.

For all COL publications, go to: <http://oasis.col.org>.





8th Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 27-30 November 2016

The 2016 Kuala Lumpur Declaration

Preamble

The 8th Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF8), co-organised by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the Open University Malaysia (OUM) in Kuala Lumpur from 27-30 November 2016,

Mindful of relevant international statements including:

The Charter of the Commonwealth 2013, which recognises the necessity of affordable education for sustainable development;

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 4 of ensuring *“inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”*;

UNESCO’s Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action, Education 2030, which sets as target 4.3 that *“by 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”* and elaborates that *‘a well-established, properly regulated tertiary education system supported by technology, open educational resources and distance education can increase access, equity, quality and relevance’* (item 43); and

The 2012 UNESCO-COL Paris Declaration on Open Educational Resources (OER) which advocates that States *“facilitate enabling environments for use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)”*.

- A. Recommends that governments, institutions, the private sector and civil society:
1. **Promote lifelong learning** through the widespread availability of appropriate technologies and multilingual opportunities in formal, non-formal and informal learning which are open to people, places, methods and ideas;
 2. **Reinforce market-driven skills development using open and distance learning (ODL) and blended and flexible learning** in collaboration with education, industry, agriculture and service sectors to empower and ensure sustainable livelihoods for all;
 3. **Encourage demand driven and context-specific research and innovation in technology** to promote access, equity and lifelong learning;
 4. **Institutionalise a quality culture** in ODL systems focusing on learners' learning outcomes;
 5. **Support teacher education and in-service teacher training** with ODL and blended and flexible learning, and increase the supply of qualified teachers;
 6. **Mainstream the use of OER** by developing strategies and policies at governmental and institutional levels to enhance quality while potentially reducing the cost of education;
 7. **Emphasise the key role of leadership** in strengthening learner-centred ODL which can widen access, enhance equity and gain respectability;
 8. **Ensure that the education of women and girls** through ODL is given utmost importance with a targeted approach, in support of SDG 5;
 9. **Strengthen ODL** that is inclusive and accessible to all persons with disabilities; and
 10. **Reinforce commitment to small island developing states and small states** in their efforts to advance education and learning with ODL, in tackling their particular economic, energy and climate change challenges, and in building their resilience for the future.
- B. Brings the above recommendations to the next Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CEEM) and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) for further consideration and implementation.

Kuala Lumpur, 30 November 2016

LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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



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